Bengaluru Thursday, January 8, 2026 Pages 18 Vol 79 No 8 ₹7

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DH

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Dhurandhar biggest-earning Hindi film

Aditya Dhar's movie tops box office with Rs 831-crore nett

Page 11

Nation P.7

D K Shivakumar, Baghel appointed observers for Assam polls

World P.12

Trump not ruling out military options to acquire Greenland

Nation
Fadnavis flays BJP pact with Cong, AIMIM **P.7**

Nation
Census 2027 to start from April **P.7**

Quickly

3 die of burns at Belagavi sugar factory

Three workers were killed and five others suffered severe burn injuries due to leakage of boiling sugarcane juice during repair works of valves at a sugar factory in Belagavi district on Wednesday. While a valve was being replaced, boiling liquid leaked and employees suffered burn injuries.

Details on Page 6

B'desh Hindu man drowns as mob chases him

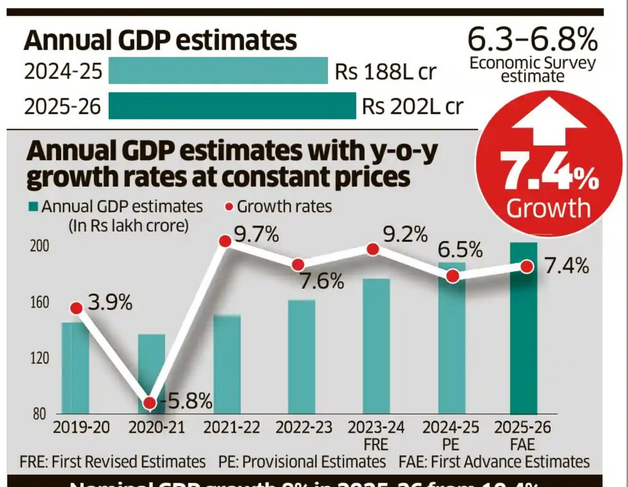
A 25-year-old Hindu man died after he jumped into a canal to escape a mob which accused him of theft in northwestern Bangladesh, in the latest incident of violence targeting minorities. The deceased was identified as Mithun Sarkar, the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council said.

Details on Page 12

India's GDP to grow at 7.4% in FY26: Govt

Higher than last fiscal's 6.5%; growth amid tariff tensions

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS



Nominal GDP growth 8% in 2025-26 from 10.4% in 2024-25. Budgetary assumption 10.1%

- Nominal-real GDP growth gap (60 basis points) lowest in 15 yrs
- Per capita national income projected to increase Rs 16,025 to Rs 2,47,487 in FY26
- Services sector remains the key growth engine, estimated to grow at 9.1% in FY26, against last year's 7.2%

Nominal GDP pegged at Rs 357.14L cr

> India's Reform Express continues to gain momentum. This is powered by NDA govt's comprehensive investment push and demand-led policies. We are working to realise our dream of a prosperous India
>
> **NARENDRA MODI**
> Prime Minister

India's economic growth is expected to accelerate to 7.4% in the financial year ending March 2026, sharply higher than 6.5% expansion recorded in the previous year, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said on Wednesday.

As per the first advance estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) for 2025-26 released by the NSO, economic growth in the current fiscal is set to exceed the government's earlier projection of 6.3–6.8%. In the first half of the fiscal, the GDP growth stood at 8%.

While the real economic growth at constant 2011-12 price is set to exceed the budgetary expectation, the nominal GDP is likely to fall short. Nominal GDP growth at current price is projected at 8% in 2025-26, which is lower than the budgetary assumption of 10.1% and the previous year's record of 10.4%.

The gap between nominal and real GDP growth for this fiscal is pegged at 60 basis points (0.60%), the lowest since 2011-12. This is because of low inflation. Both wholesale and retail price inflation are projected to be at near record lows in the current fiscal.

"India's growth momentum has sustained despite elevated global uncertainty due to tariff tensions, riding on accommodative monetary and fiscal policies, robust corporate balance sheets, and favourable developments such as above-normal monsoons and low crude oil prices," said Dharmakirti Joshi, Chief Economist at Crisil.

The government's revenues are likely to be impacted due to slower-than-expected growth in nominal GDP as the tax collections are dependent on the current prices.

The official estimate on the key macroeconomic data comes weeks ahead of the Union Budget, which is likely to be presented on February 1.

Analysts said the government is likely to meet the 4.4% fiscal deficit target helped by higher-than-budgeted non-tax revenues and cut in expenditure. "We believe that even though the tax revenues are likely to be lower than the budgeted for FY26, non-tax revenue will be on the higher side thereby not impacting the overall receipts much," SBI Group Chief Economic Advisor Soumya Kanti Ghosh said.

▸ GDP, Page 3B

B'luru buyers chase premium houses

People shunning smaller flats without amenities

MAHESH KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Changing trend

- B'luru's unsold inventory is 67,518 units by end of 2025
- 25% jump from previous year
- Sub-Rs 1 cr segment, once market's backbone, losing ground
- City witnessing demand in Rs 1 cr- Rs 5 cr category
- North B'luru captured 34% of new launches, 33% of sales in 2025

Homebuyers looking for larger houses in

- 1,600-2,000 sq ft for 3BHK
- 1,200 sq ft for 2BHK

Bengaluru's real estate market is witnessing a stark divide: premium homes are flying off the shelves while budget properties languish unsold. Homebuyers are shunning smaller flats lacking amenities, pushing the city's unsold inventory to 67,518 units by end of 2025, a 25% jump from the previous year. The sub-Rs 1 crore segment, once the market's backbone, is losing ground rapidly.

Developers are aligning their offerings to meet the rising demand from aspirational buyers with a 7% increase year-on-year in the average unit size launched in 2025 compared to 2024, according to Knight Frank, an independent property consultant.

The city is witnessing traction in houses in the Rs 1-5 crore category, where the QTS (quarters-to-sale) stands at a healthy 2.9-3.1 quarters. These figures point at a market where developers are choosing to take on inventory risk at the premium end, confident in the velocity of sales, it said.

"The lack of interest of homebuyers to opt for smaller houses was mainly due to poor accessibility to their offices, lack of modern amenities and size. Post-Covid, customers are preferring larger homes with better amenities," said M Murali, Chairman and MD, Shriram Properties.

▸ Homebuyers, Page 3B

Demolitions in Delhi: 5 cops hurt in violence

NEW DELHI, DHNS: At least five police personnel were injured after an anti-encroachment drive near the Faiz-e-Elahi mosque in Delhi's Ramlila Maidan area turned violent early Wednesday. The area adjoining the Maidan and the historic Turkman Gate were locked down with heavy police presence.

Clashes erupted Tuesday night after the Municipal Corporation of Delhi carried out a demolition drive on encroached properties.

Details on Page 7

Not just bites, dogs on roads pose hazards to motorists, says SC

NEW DELHI, DHNS

CANINE CASE

- Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for animal rights groups, says when he was in university, there were dogs and none bit him
- Bench says National Law School of India University, Bengaluru has reported many dog attacks
- Sibal contends that putting all dogs in the shelter is not the solution
- Bench remarks that the only thing left is providing counselling to the dog

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said there should be an exercise to ensure roads or streets are free of dogs, as no one can read the canine's mind when it is in a mood to bite or not.

Hearing a suo motu case related to stray dogs, a bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and N V Anjaria said dogs may bite or chase somebody while the person is on a two-wheeler or a bicycle, and the person may fall or an accident could occur.

"Prevention is always better than cure, roads have to be clear," the bench said.

The court said dogs running on the road is itself dangerous for passing vehicles, especially two-wheelers and cycle riders.

It said, biting is not the only issue, dogs chasing people on cycles resulted in accidents.

▸ Dogs, Page 3B

BJP workers say cops stripped woman; police deny charge

HUBBALLI, DHNS: A video of a disrobed BJP woman worker in a police vehicle went viral on Wednesday, sparking a controversy, with BJP workers accusing the police of disrobing her. The police, however, refuted the charge, claiming that the woman herself had taken off her clothes.

BJP workers protest in Hubballi. DH PHOTO

BJP workers accused the police of inhuman treatment while detaining Sujata Handi on January 5 on charges of abusing, threatening and assaulting a corporator.

They alleged that the police acted under pressure from Congress corporator Suvarna Kallakuntla.

In Haveri, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah also said the woman herself removed her clothes and attacked the women police personnel. "This is bad behaviour. No one should take law into their hands. If they do, then legal action will have to be taken," he warned.

Complaints were filed against Sujata and others alleging that they had abused, threatened and assaulted corporator Suvarna Kallakuntla and resident Prashanth Bommaji for questioning the presence of BJP workers with a booth level officer (BLO) during the family mapping of voters at Chalukya Nagar at Keshwapur on January 1.

Staging a protest in front of Keshwapur police station on Wednesday, BJP workers charged that the Dalit woman was disrobed during her detention due to political pressure.

▸ BJP workers, Page 3B

Bannerghatta: CEC flags ESZ violation, suggests restoration

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a big blow to the Karnataka government, the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) has recommended withdrawal of the 2020 government notification that diluted the eco sensitive zone (ESZ) of the Bannerghatta National Park and restoration of the wider ESZ as provided in the draft notification of 2016 within six months.

The CEC report comes in the wake of a petition by KB Belliappa and others challenging the reduction of the ESZ around the boundary of Bannerghatta National Park (BNP). The petitioners noted that the ESZ in 2017 was proposed at 100 metre to 4.5 km from the boundary of the BNP. This was cut to 100 metre-1 km as per the 2020 notification. As a result, the total area under ESZ came down from 268.96 sq km to 168.84 sq km. This effectively removed protection to about 100 sq km of the buffer zone.

The dilution led to large-scale commercialisation of land, resulting in mushrooming of resorts and unchecked stone mining just outside the ESZ. Farmers have said they were pressured to sell their lands for layouts.

KHB layout inside ESZ

The CEC report points to a layout being developed within the 4.5 km of ESZ. The area is the Suryanagar Phase 4 developed under the banner of Karnataka Housing Board. The report called it a "large-scale housing project of more than 2,500 acres of land". DH sent queries to KHB officials but could not get a response.

▸ Bannerghatta, Page 3B

CULTURAL FUSION

12th-century inscription reveals Hoysala–Tamil bond

SNEHA MADIYALKAR & MD HUSSAIN
MYSURU, DHNS

A white granite slab at the entrance of a temple in Mandya district had escaped the attention of generations of devotees until scholars recently found out its historical and cultural importance.

An inscription on the slab, found at the Sri Mahalakshmi Temple at K Bettahalli in Pandavapura taluk, has opened a window to the 12th century, revealing a close relation between Hoysala Karnataka and Tamilakam.

Scholars from the Mysuru-based Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Kannada (CESCK) have identified that the rare and unpublished inscription dates to the tenure of Hoysala King Narasimha I (1152-1173 CE). Carved in Kannada script, the nine-line inscription utilises Kannada, Tamil and Sanskrit languages, which experts believe is an indication of a shared past cutting across language and culture.

Archaeologists with the inscription at Sri Mahalakshmi Temple. DH PHOTO

C A Shashidhara, Junior Archaeologist at CESCK, said the inscription begins with "the auspicious invocation of 'Svastishri' and bears the royal emblems of conch (shanka) and discus (chakra)".

▸ Inscription, Page 3B

Push for Classical Kannada body

Twenty-two of the 55 scholarly volumes of classical Indian languages released by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday were in Kannada. But that has brought little cheer to the Kannada aficionados, who are pushing for an autonomous body to promote the cause of Classical Kannada.

Details on Page 3B

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6-year-old girl's body found in Whitefield canal

BENGALURU, DHNS: A six-year-old girl was allegedly kidnapped and murdered at a migrant colony in Pattandur Agrahara, Whitefield, in east Bengaluru, police said on Wednesday.

The girl belonged to a family of migrant labourers from West Bengal.

Police said the child's father, Injamul Sheikh, lodged a complaint on January 6, stating that she had been missing since the afternoon of January 5. He suspected Yusuf Meer, another migrant labourer from West Bengal who lived nearby, of being involved in the crime.

Both the victim's family and the suspect were engaged in daily-wage work and rag-picking in the Nallurhalli area, police sources told *DH*. The girl's body was found on Tuesday night in a dry canal close to the colony.

"The suspect is absconding and a search is on. Prima facie, the child appears to have been strangled, as plastic ropes were found around her neck. No visible signs of sexual assault were found. The post-mortem report is awaited," a senior police officer said.

Kidnap, murder case

The suspect will be booked for kidnapping and murder, the officer added.

Mentally ill man falls to death from apartment

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 26-year-old man, said to be suffering from mental illness, fell to his death from the 16th floor of an apartment in northwest Bengaluru on Wednesday.

The deceased, whose identity has not been disclosed, lived with his parents in Yeshwantpur.

Police said they were alerted by the apartment's security guard. The family has not raised any suspicion regarding the death, and an Unnatural Death Report (UDR) has been registered.

According to the UDR, the man, whose family hails from Dakshina Kannada, had been suffering from a chronic mental illness for the past six years and was under treatment. He had earlier studied in Europe and returned to India about nine years ago.

"An investigation is underway to determine whether it was a case of suicide or an accidental fall," a senior police officer told *DH*.

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8-km elevated walkways planned under ORR metro line

Proposal approved at GBA meet; funding still unresolved

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

An eight-kilometre stretch of the Blue Line along the Outer Ring Road (ORR) is set to have elevated walkways under the metro viaduct, a first-of-its-kind design that would offer direct access to tech parks and offices employing a large workforce.

The proposal was approved at a meeting of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) on Tuesday. However, no decision was taken on funding, with the responsibility now resting with the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRCL) and the Outer Ring Road Companies Association (ORRCA).

As per the concept plan, the walkway will benefit tech parks located midway between two metro stations, which currently face accessibility issues due to the lack of proper footpaths and frequent encroachments.

The plan is not new.

When the Blue Line was at the design stage, a request was made to the BMRCL to construct foundations for two small pillars alongside each metro pillar to accommodate an elevated skywalk. The idea was mooted to address pedestrian and walkability challenges along the ORR, which employs an estimated 6 to 8 lakh people.

In a letter to the GBA and BMRCL, Mahadevapura MLA Manjula Aravind Limbavali also sought the construction of an elevated walkway, particularly between Iblur and Mahadevapura.

GBA approval was required as the project area falls within the corporation limits.

Clement Jayakumar, a member of the Mahadevapura Task Force, said the project was conceptualised to improve access to metro stations along the ORR.

"There are about 30,000 people working in Cessna Business Park, but the nearest metro station is some distance away. A skywalk under the metro viaduct connecting the station to the tech park will help commuters avoid navigating narrow and encroached footpaths," he said. He added that Eco Space, located about 500 metres from the station, would also benefit significantly.

Jayakumar urged the BMRCL to bear part of the project cost, while tech companies could fund the remainder and provide land for installing the skywalk.

Manas Das, president of ORRCA, said the association does not have any revenue source, though some developers had expressed willingness to fund parts of the project. "It's a work in progress," he said.

BMRCL Managing Director J Ravishankar did not respond to calls or text messages seeking comment.

An artist's impression of the elevated skywalks proposed under the ORR metro line.

When the Blue Line was at the design stage, a request was made to the BMRCL to construct foundations for two small pillars alongside each metro pillar to accommodate an elevated skywalk. The idea was mooted to address pedestrian and walkability challenges along the ORR, which employs an estimated 6 to 8 lakh people.

Transport minister inspects airport pick-up system

BENGALURU, DHNS

Ramalinga Reddy

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy carried out a reality check at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) to gain perspective on pick-up rules and overcharge fees enforced by the authorities in December.

Reddy, accompanied by the Bangalore International Airport Limited management and a group of taxi drivers, surveyed both the airport terminals and the designated parking areas.

"I did not have to walk all the way to the parking area, and it was already noticeable how far it was from the arrival gates. I can understand why the new rules are frustrating to both passengers and cab drivers. It does not work in favour of either," Reddy told *DH*.

The minister had also previously pointed out that the new rules do not take into consideration the needs of differently abled and senior citizens.

Under the new pick-up rules enforced on December 13 at T1, commercial vehicles not associated with the airport operator must wait at designated parking zones, P3 and P4. Vehicles receive 10 minutes of complimentary parking, which has now been extended to 15 minutes. After this, cab drivers must pay Rs 100 for a half-hour slot and Rs 50 for every additional hour.

The designated parking areas can be accessed using shuttle buses, which operate at intervals of seven minutes, in addition to buggies and cars available at T1. Similar rules were enforced at T2 on December 11.

"I have had a meeting with the management regarding this and guided them towards rolling back the rules. This is the second meeting we have had in this regard. If the management is adamant about this, I will reach out to the chief secretary to look into this," he added.

The minister was also unhappy with the reduction of BMTC bays at the airport.

Chikkaballapura MP K Sudhakar carried out a similar interaction with the management on Tuesday.

Another protest

Meanwhile, cab drivers at the airport are planning another protest.

G Narayanaswamy, president of Karnataka Chalakara Okkuta, who is at the forefront of the movement, said, "The lives of approximately 35,000 drivers have been affected by these rules, and the airport has not taken any responsibility. We have trust in our minister. But in case the airport decides to stick with its rules, thousands of drivers will be protesting at the airport."

With the new facility at the airport, the management aims to cut landfill disposal to just 2–3%, with 97–98% of waste recycled or recovered through in-house systems and authorised partners.

KIA inaugurates in-house solid waste management centre

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) inaugurated its in-house Integrated Solid Waste Management Centre.

As one of India's busiest airports, it currently generates approximately 24–26 tonnes of solid waste daily across its terminals, airside operations, commercial outlets and allied facilities.

The new centre enables scientific, end-to-end waste processing at source. It enhances operational control, reduces reliance on external handlers, minimises transportation-related environmental risks and contributes to lower emissions, improved compliance and greater operational resilience, a statement from the airport said.

With the facility in place, the airport expects to reduce landfill disposal to 2–3 percent of total waste, enabling 97–98 percent of waste to be recycled or recovered through in-house processes and authorised partners.

The centre has a total processing capacity of 77 tonnes per day and is designed to manage both organic and inorganic waste streams. Organic waste, up to 50 tonnes per day, will be treated through biomethanation technology, converting biodegradable waste into compressed biogas for use in airport kitchens, along with liquid organic manure and compost to support landscaping requirements.

The remaining 27 tonnes per day of inorganic waste will be processed through advanced segregation systems, with recyclables sent to authorised recycling partners and recoverable material used for co-processing in the cement industry.

Speaking at the inauguration, Hari Marar, MD & CEO, Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), said, "As a rapidly growing airport, we are conscious of the responsibility that comes with managing our environmental footprint. At BLR Airport, sustainability is about creating long-term value for people, the community and the environment."

He added, "The new centre strengthens our ability to manage waste at source, transform it into a resource and embed circular economy principles into everyday operations. This initiative reinforces our commitment to resilient infrastructure and responsible growth as we scale for the future."

BDA to digitise all petitions using unified tapal system

Grievances to be centrally acknowledged, tracked as e-files

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has digitised and introduced a unified petition-handling system to improve efficiency and ensure that public grievances are addressed in a timely manner.

In collaboration with India Post, the BDA has set up a Unified Tapal System under which every petition or grievance received is processed centrally and digitised.

Each petition will be acknowledged and recorded as an e-file on the e-office software before being forwarded to the officer concerned.

The move is expected to bring greater transparency in grievance redressal.

Sources said the earlier system, where petitions were physically sent directly to officials, often resulted in complaints being ignored. "There have been instances where files went missing or petitions were discarded or torn up," a source said.

Senior BDA officials said the new system would provide acknowledgements to complainants, while digitisation would ensure records are not lost.

"Before a petition reaches the official concerned, an e-file is created and there is no physical movement of files. Once the file is created, officials are required to respond, and progress will be tracked and monitored," a senior official said.

The initiative is also expected to eliminate the role of middlemen who often exploit citizens.

"People will no longer need to approach brokers who promise to get work done for a fee. Once a grievance is raised, our officials will reach out directly. We have also started open-house meetings where citizens can meet officials without intermediaries," another official said.

Most complaints received by the BDA relate to the allotment of alternative sites, grievances from residents of BDA-constructed apartments, and payments made towards the auction of corner and premium sites.

New SOP soon

To ensure timely redressal, the BDA is also preparing a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that will set timelines for different categories of complaints.

Officials said this would help bring greater accountability.

"Not all complaints can be handled in the same manner. We need to categorise them and prescribe procedures accordingly. A new SOP is being prepared to ensure grievances are addressed within defined timelines," a senior official said.

How to reach BDA

- **By post:** BDA Head Office, Kumara Park West, T Chowdaiah Road, Bengaluru-560020
- **Social media:** Raise a complaint and tag the official BDA handle on X (formerly Twitter)
- **In person:** Submit a petition at one of the five unified tapal service counters at the BDA head office
- **Email:** bda.helpline2025@gmail.com
- **WhatsApp:** 9483166622

FIR against Euro School for cheating parent

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Sarjapur police have registered a case against the administrators and the principal of Euro School on Gunjur Road for allegedly cheating a parent by falsely claiming to have obtained required clearances.

The FIR was registered on January 6 following a complaint by P Indu, a parent. It named unnamed administrators and Arunika Sawhney, the principal, as accused one and two.

Indu told the police that on November 8, 2025, she paid Rs 1,000 to enrol her child. When she visited the school, she met Sawhney, who told her, "Euro School had already obtained official permission and necessary approvals, and that admission would be granted only if the school admission fees was paid."

Believing this, Indu allegedly paid Rs 25,000 towards the admission fees.

When she sought details of permissions and clearances granted to the school, she was allegedly denied any documentation by the management, the FIR noted.

"During the admission process and until now, the school has not shown any documents regarding the permission obtained."

"It has come to light that Euro School has cheated many parents in this manner without obtaining necessary official permission or approvals. They obtained the admission fee by giving false assurances that they had official permission," Indu was quoted as saying in the FIR.

Officials unresponsive

She also claimed that she had submitted an application to the Education Department officials, but no action was taken.

An investigation is on.

Bhumika Club's 15th B'luru edition this Saturday

BENGALURU, DHNS

The 15th Bengaluru edition of Gold Winner presents Bhumika Club will be held this Saturday.

An initiative of *Deccan Herald* and *Prajavani*, the club aims to provide a platform for women from diverse walks of life to connect and network.

Since its launch in 2022, Bhumika Club has organised 34 editions across Karnataka.

This edition will be inaugurated by television actor Shyam Kanwar, best known for her role as Tara in the serial *Karna* on Zee Kannada.

The event will include a children's fashion show; a 'Skill to Income' session by Asha Biradar, president of the WICCI Leadership Coaching Council, Karnataka; a Zumba session by fitness expert Chandana Lakshmikanth; a performance by singer Anagha M; and a cookery contest.

The evening will feature games such as 'Spin the Wheel'. The winners will receive prizes, including a water purifier worth Rs 15,000, movie tickets at a multiplex and a family dinner voucher at Kings Club.

Join us at Nagarabhavi

- The event will take place on Saturday at 3.30 pm in Kings Club, Block 8, Lakeside, Sir M Vishweshvaraiah Layout, Nagarabhavi.
- Entry is free.
- Registration via QR code or contact +91-9035036186.

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◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Book release: 'Kolala Kanavarike', written by Devika S; C Somashekar and Pramila Nesargi to participate; Organised by Jnanasambuddha Prakashana; Nayana Auditorium, Kannada Bhavana, JC Road; 10 am.

Inauguration: Public Service Examination training centre; Organised by Dr Manmohan Singh Bangalore City University; KA Dayananda, CS Kedar and others; Jnanajyothi Auditorium, Central College Campus; 10.30 am.

Lecture: 'Simple Tips for a Peaceful Life'; Devaraju Chennasandra to speak; Kannada Yuvajana Jana Sangha auditorium, Hombegowda Nagar; 6.30 pm.

CULTURAL

Bharatanatyam performance: Students of Nritya Disha Trust; Direction by Darshini Manjunath; Organised by Nanjangud Raghavendra Swamy Mutt; Mutt premises; 5.15 pm.

RELIGIOUS

Sri Sringeri Shankar Mutt: Sangeethotsava, concerts from 5 pm; Shankar Mutt Road, Shankarpuram.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	27.0°C
Minimum	16.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	89%
Sunset (Jan 8)	6:07 pm
Sunrise (Jan 9)	6:43 am
Moonrise	10:00 pm
Moonset	10:00 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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SANKRANTI RUSH

Workers load bundles of sugarcane ahead of Makara Sankranti at KR Market in Bengaluru on Wednesday. The festival will be celebrated on January 15.
DH PHOTO/ BK JANARDHAN

Woman, who was set ablaze, dies

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 41-year-old woman, set ablaze by a man two weeks ago for refusing him permission to marry her daughter, died on Tuesday, officials said.

The woman, Geetha, had been undergoing treatment at Victoria Hospital since December 23.

Geetha was allegedly set ablaze by 31-year-old Mutthu Abhimanyu, a tea stall owner in Bhovi Colony, after she refused his demand to marry her 19-year-old daughter. Police have arrested the accused.

Woman alleges acid attack by in-laws over property dispute

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 35-year-old woman has accused her mother-in-law of pouring acid over her legs during an assault at her residence, following a dispute over property in the Siddapura police station limits.

A complaint lodged by Ashwini Umesh stated that her mother-in-law Kempamma and father-in-law Muniraj came to her house on January 3 around 9.20 am and picked a quarrel over a property issue.

During the altercation, Kempamma allegedly poured acid on Ashwini's legs, causing injuries.

Ashwini stated that when she screamed for help, the accused tried to barge into the house and attempted to attack her husband, Umesh, a cab driver.

The complainant alleged that Muniraj, a retired government employee, assaulted her with a stick and issued threats of sexual assault. She also claimed that Kempamma attempted to assault her husband with the help of her son Manjunath, during which she was pushed aside and held by the neck.

A senior police officer said the incident was captured on CCTV cameras. He added that frequent quarrels have been reported between the two families for several years over the property dispute, and further investigation is on.

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AMRITA MBA | APPLY WITH ACAT 2026
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1 Family Dinner Voucher

Water issue fixed

BENGALURU, DHNS: The BWSSB on Wednesday rectified the water contamination problem at Lingarajapuram and resumed Cauvery water supply to the area.

A statement from the board said workers changed a 100-metre pipeline in just 24 hours.

Using robotic technology, the engineers ascertained the exact spot of contamination.

A corroded pipeline, 40 years old, had resulted in the contamination.

Emergency care, rehab offer hope to homeless mentally ill

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

A former IT employee in her late 20s was found wandering the streets of Bellandur, living in the shadows of her previous life, while suffering from severe mental illness marked by erotomania delusions and catatonic withdrawal.

Rescued by an NGO, she was admitted to the Emergency Care and Rehabilitation Centre (ECRC) at CV Raman Hospital in Indiranagar for treatment and rehabilitation. Months later, she is slowly recovering and has secured an entry-level job.

Her journey mirrors that of more than 100 homeless people with mental illness who have recovered and rebuilt their lives through the state's ECRC programme.

Four months after the government established ECRCs, 154 homeless patients with mental illness have received treatment and rehabilitation.

DINESH GUNDU RAO,
Health & Family Welfare Minister

"We are planning to open more emergency care and rehabilitation centres as the response has been good. Our ultimate goal is to reunite these patients with their families.

The programme is currently operational in Bengaluru Urban, Udupi, Gadag and Yadgir districts and will soon be extended to Chitradurga, Ramanagar, Davangere, Bengaluru Rural and Mysuru.

In Bengaluru Urban, the programme is being run at CV Raman Hospital in association with Aladamara Foundation, a city-based NGO working to provide mental health facilities to homeless people. Patients are identified and brought in by NGOs or police, who hand them over to the hospital.

CV Raman Hospital has allocated 28 beds for the ECRC and provides food and medicines, while the NGO supplies psychiatrists, psychologists and other required manpower.

At the Bengaluru centre, 135 patients — 68 men, 58 women and one transgender — have been treated and rehabilitated so far.

Dr Rajesh KS, hospital medical superintendent, said 32% of patients were diagnosed with schizophrenia, 21% with mental retardation, 14% with bipolar disorder, 8% with depression, and 6% with dementia.

"Thirty-three percent have fully recovered, 50% have shown improvement and others are still under treatment," he told *DH*.

Of those admitted at the centre, 37% are from Bengaluru, 26% from other districts and 37% from other states.

SDPI's National Representative Council on Jan 20–21

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) will hold its 6th National Representative Council meeting in Mangaluru, Dakshina Kannada district, on January 20 and 21.

The conference will see the election of the party's national executive committee and national office-bearers for the next term.

According to an SDPI press note, organisational elections have already been completed in 14 states, resulting in the appointment of new office-bearers.

"The National Representative Council meeting in Mangaluru is expected to serve as a platform to provide clear direction for the country's political future," the party said.

EASTERN RAILWAY

Tender No. : SDSTE-ETN-SUKHDEV-HALT-25, dated 05.01.2026. Divisional Railway Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, New DRM Building, near Rail Museum, Howrah-711101 invites Open e-Tenders against **Tender No. SDSTE-ETN-SUKHDEV-HALT-25** for the following work. Bidders will be able to submit their original/ revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Name of Work:** Construction of Sukhdev Halt beween Dainhat and Katwa Jn. Stations in Bandel – Katwa Section of Howrah Division. **Bidding System:** Single Packet. **Advertised Value:** ₹ 79,08,788.06. **Earnest Money/Bid Security:** ₹ 1,58,200.00. **Tender Document Cost :** ₹ 0.00, **Period of Completion:** 9 Months. **Validity of Offer:** 60 Days. **Date and Time of uploading Tender:** 05.01.2026 at 18.23 hrs. **Bidding Start Date:** 14.01.2026. **Tender Closing Date & Time:** 28.01.2026 at 15.00 hrs. The details are available at website **www.ireps.gov.in** HWH-514/2025-26

Tender Notices are also available at Website www.er.indianrailways.gov.in/www.ireps.gov.in

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KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No. 2, 2/1 & 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagara, Bengaluru-560 009. Phone: 080-22265383
Website: **www.kiadb.in** email: **ceoem@kiadb.in**

No.: KIADB/HO/ADMN-1415/15782/2025-26 Date: 07.01.2026

PUBLIC NOTICE
Change of Address

The general public is hereby notified that, the workplace of the head office of **Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board** has been shifted from "No. 49, 4th & 5th Floor, East Wing, Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560 001" to "No. 2, 2/1 & 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagara, Bengaluru-560 009" from 01.01.2026. All future office correspondences should be made in the new address.

Sd/- Chief Executive Officer & Executive Member

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER- Call-2
(only through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Contractors for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G.Road, Bengaluru-560 009

Division	IFT Number	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
North-2	BWSSB/ENTE/AE-1/3247/2025-26 Date:05.01.2026	Rs. 30,43,627/- / Rs. 61,000/-	16.01.2026 Upto 3.00 P.M.	17.01.2026 after 4.00 P.M.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (North-2)

The details regarding the tender & participation in the e-Procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/DD-C.P/4906/KSMCA/2025-26

Zilla Panchayath Kolar-563101

Office of the Executive Engineer Panchayath Raj Engineering Division Kolar-563101

Phone No: 08152-222570, e-mail: eepredkolar1@gmail.com
No: 21/2025-26 Date: 06.01.2026

Short term Two Cover System Tender Notice
(Through KPPP e-Procurement KW-III)

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka as per KTPP Act 2000 item rate tenders were invited in two cover system (SBD) in the forms KW-3 through KPPP e-procurement from authorized PWD contractors registered in appropriate class for KW-3 Indent No: 19997, 19998 (SC Reserved) Indent No:20008 (2A Reserved) & Indent No's: 19952, 19999, 20000, 20003 & 20009 (General Category) Average amount put to tender is Rs. 84.51 lakhs to Rs. 84.70 lakhs. (Bangarpet Taluk 08 Road Works) The contractor's are requested for participate in KPP Portal e-Tender through GOK **website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Pre bid meeting schedule **dt : 19.01.2026 at 11.00 AM** in the undersigned office last date for submission of tender application and uploading tender forms through website from **dt: 06.01.2026 to 20.01.2026 up to 4.00pm** and date of opening of technical bids in KPP portal on **date: 21.01.2026 at 04.30 pm** The eligible technically qualified contractors financial bids opening **date: 23.01.2026 at 11.00 am.** The notification can be obtained from the KPPP e-procurement portal. Further details can be had from the above office on all working days in working hours. KPP Portal helpline No's for tender clarification with respect uploading and downloading you can **contact: +91-8046010000, +91-8068948777, +91-9240214000, +91-9240214001**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PRE Division, Kolar
DIPR/KOLAR/RO:436/KSMCA/2025-26

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

(CONSTRUCTION/ROAD SAFETY PROJECTS)
E-TENDER

Tender Notice No.CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-09-2025 DATED 06.01.2026

For and on behalf of The President of India, Deputy Chief Engineer, Construction, Road Safety Projects, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai 600 008 invites e-tender for the following works as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal **www.ireps.gov.in**. The tenderers/Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal www.ireps.gov.in and only online tenders will be accepted.

Sl. No.	Tender No:	Name Of Work	Cash Value (Rupees)	Closing Date @15.00 Hrs
1	CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-12-2025	Chengalpattu-Arakkonam section - Proposed construction of Road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 49D at km 63/900-64/000 including Limited Height Subway between Takkolam & Arakkonam Junction	148602532	27.01.2026
2	CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-13-2025	Tiruchchirappalli Division - Villupuram -Tiruchchirappalli (Main Line) section: Proposed Construction of Road Over Bridge in lieu of LC No. 138 at Km 185/300 400 with 1x36m effective span steel composite girder including limited height subway of size 6m x 2.85m in between Panruti and Melpattambakkam stations.	96019884	27.01.2026

For further details, please refer web site portal **www.ireps.gov.in** or contact Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Construction, Road Safety Projects, Southern Railway, E.V.R. High Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008.

Deputy Chief Engineer, Construction, Road Safety Projects,Chennai Egmore.
for and On behalf of President of India

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY
BIOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COUNCIL (BRIC)

(An Autonomous Body under the Department of Biotechnology)

NOTICE

Ref. Advt. No. CBC 360301/11/0007/2526 published in Employment News dated 22nd September - 28th September, 2025.

In response to the above advertisement, very few applications have been received. Therefore, to have healthy competition and select the most qualified person, the advertisement is re-opened with the same terms and conditions for a further period of 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice for the following 06 posts under Deputation:

I.	Director (Administration)	-	1 Post
II.	Director (Finance)	-	1 Posts
III.	Section Officer	-	4 Posts

The candidates who have already applied for above posts need not apply again. The application form and other details are available on the Websites: **www.dbtindia.gov.in, www.bric.nic.in.**

CBC 36301/11/0010/2526

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

No.M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-10 Dt. 06.01.2026

For and on behalf of the President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager/Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai 3, invites online tender from the experienced Contractors for the following works for further details, please refer to **www.ireps.gov.in**

Tender No. / Name of the work	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-10 Fabrication, Repair & Replacement work in 2 Nos of 8 wheeler tower wagon-RU-05879, RU-97880 and 1 No of 4 Wheeler Tower Wagon-RU 9512 in Chennai Division.
Value (Rs.)	5239630.71
Closing date/time	27-01-2026 (15:00hrs)

Divisional Railway Manager,
Traction Distribution Branch,Chennai Division, Chennai-3

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

(CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION)

Tender Notice No.MTP-SG-CN-2025-26-01-OT Dated:06/01/2026
(TWO PACKET SYSTEM)

For and on behalf of The President of India, The Deputy Chief Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway, Tambaram invites e-tender for the following works:

Item No.	Name of the work
1	Provision of Signalling and Telecommunication Arrangements inconnection with Elimination of PSR in Magnesite yard as part of Doubling of track between Salem Junction and Omalur Junction.

Item No.	Cash value in Rupees	Bid Security (EMD) (Rupees)	Last Date and time of submission of e-Tender through IREPS site	Cost of Tender Document (Rs.)	Period of Completion in month(s)
1	127702130.29	788500.00	27/01/2026	0	Six (06)

Tenderers can view full details of tender and submit their offer at the e-tender portal **www.ireps.gov.in** of Indian Railways.

The supply/work is subject to GST rules applicable from time to time.

Dy. CHIEF SIGNAL & TELECOMMUNICATION ENGINEER/CONSTRUCTION/S.Rly., TAMBARAM, CHENNAI-600 045.
For and on behalf of the President of India

Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society

(An Organisation of Govt. of Karnataka)
No. 8, MSB-1, 6th & 7th Floor, Cunningham Road, Bengaluru - 560 052

No:KREIS/EE-1/Tender-24/2025-26 Date:07.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E-Procurement Only)

The tenders have been invited for Construction of (Sc) Dr BR Ambedkar Govt Post Metric Boys Hostel at Nettigere, Bengaluru south taluk & District, Construction of STP, Supply and Installation of Digital Name Boards and Civil Repair works in the jurisdiction of KREIS **(Tender Indent No. 805, 521/call-4, 584/call-3, 590/call-4, 591/call-4 and 730/call-2)** through e-Portal vide website: http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on 07.01.2026. The last date for receipt of tender is 07.02.2026 and 22.01.2026 respectively. The details may be viewed at above website.

Note: Any changes in term tender notification will not be published in dailies. It will be published in e-procurement portal only.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer-1,
KREIS, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/4908/CCL/2025-26

Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Niyamitha

(Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Executive Engineer, KNNL,No.6 Canal Division, Ballari

Tender Notification

Reference: This office tender notification No: 1606 ; Dated: 05.01.2026.

The Executive Engineer, KNNL No.6 Canal Division, Ballari on behalf of Managing Director KNNL, Bangalore invites the tender for Three works namely W.I.3457, W.I.3637 & WI.3639 with Amount put to Tender (Excluding GST) of Rs.87.70 lakhs to Rs.311.27 lakhs respectively in the Jurisdiction of this Division under the head of account 4701 from the registered eligible contractors in the KPWD, GOK on Two Cover system basis through Karnataka public procurement portal.

The bidders can access and download blank tender document through e-procurement from 08.01.2026 from 11.00 AM onwards

1.The last date for the submission of tenders is 23.01.2026 up to 4.30pm, Technical bid opening date is 24.01.2026 at 5.00 pm and Financial bid opening date is 29.01.2026 at 5.00 pm or after approval of Technical Bid. (W.I.3457 & W.I.3637)

2.The last date for the submission of tenders is 09.02.2026 up to 4.30pm, Technical bid opening date is 10.02.2026 at 5.00 pm and Financial bid opening date is 16.02.2026 at 5.00 pm or after approval of Technical Bid. (W.I.3639)

The Tender documents can be viewed/downloaded from the website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. For any changes either in tender details or any other conditions, if recalled, tenderers can view in KPPP Portal only. Separate notification in this regards will not be published.

For any additional information, the tenderers may contact the office of the undersigned during office working hours or submit the request through office email: eeno6cdbly@yahoo.in for information.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
KNNL,No.6 Canal Division, Ballari

DIPR/Ballari/880/KSMCA/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/5837 DATE: 06/01/2026

E-Tender Notification

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise e-Tenders from Registration in KPWD Department authorized by Karnataka Government for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 8 works under head of account 5054–Major District Roads Improvements, amount put to tender is minimum of Rs. 80.00 Lakhs and maximum of Rs. 160.00 Lakhs.

Calendar of events for the works at Sl No. 1 to 3 & 5 to 8: 1)Pre Bid Meeting Date: 19-01-2026 AT 11.00 PM, 2)Last date for queries & clarifications : 21-01-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 3)Last Date of Receipt of Bids:23-01-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 4)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 27-01-2026 at 4.30 PM, 5)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 6)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

Calendar of events for the work at Sl No. 4:1)Last date for queries & clarifications : 29-01-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 31-01-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 02-02-2026 at 4.30 PM, 4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids",5)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept., Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD Division Chikkodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1606/KSMCA/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.

ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕುಟುಂಬ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಎಸ್.ಎಸ್.ಹೈಟೆಕ್ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ ಹತ್ತಿರ, ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನಗರ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಎನ್.ಸಿ.ಸಿ ಕಛೇರಿ ಪಕ್ಕ ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ–577005 ದೂರವಾಣಿ : 08192 237833 ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ : 08192 230919 e mail : dhodavangere@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಜಿಆದಾ/ಟೆಂಡರ್/ಹೂ.ಗು/05/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:06.01.2026

ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕು.ಕ.ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ 22 ಫಾರ್ಮಸಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, 02 ಕಿರಿಯ ಪ್ರಯೋಗ ಶಾಲಾ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, 02 ಶುಶ್ರೂಷಕರು, 102 ಗ್ರೂಪ್–ಡಿ, 20 ನಾನ್–ಕ್ಲಿನಿಕಲ್‌ಗ್ರೂಪ್–ಡಿ ಹಾಗೂ 02 ಡಾಟಾ ಎಂಟ್ರಿ ಆಪರೇಟರ್ (ಒಟ್ಟು–150 ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳು) ಮಾರ್ಚ್–2026 ರ (ದಿನಾಂಕ:31–03–2026) ರವರೆಗಿನ ಅವಧಿಗೆ ಹೊರ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆಯ (ಕೆ.ಟಿ.ಟಿ.ಪಿ ನಿಯಮ) ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ 1999 ಮತ್ತು ನಿಯಮಗಳು 2000ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ದ್ವಿ–ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ದತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.

(1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ : ದಿನಾಂಕ:08.01.2026 (2) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಂದಾಜು ಒಟ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತ : ರೂ. 68,08,567/– (ಅರವತ್ತೆಂಟು ಲಕ್ಷದ ಎಂಟು ಸಾವಿರದಐದು ನೂರ ಅರವತ್ತೇಳು ರೂ.ಗಳು ಮಾತ್ರ) (3) ಅನ್‌ಲೈನ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಫಾರಂಗಳನ್ನು ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅನ್ನು E-Procurement Portal ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 09.01.2026, ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ರಿಂದ ದಿನಾಂಕ:15.01.2026 ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 4:30 ರವರೆಗೆ (4) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ:16.01.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 04.30ಗಂಟೆಗೆ (5) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆಯ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು (6) ಹಣಕಾಸಿನ ಲಕೋಟೆಯನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು (7) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪಾವತಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ : ರೂ. 1,70,000/– (ಒಂದು ಲಕ್ಷದ ಎಪ್ಪತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ ರೂ.ಗಳು ಮಾತ್ರ) (8) E-Procurement Portal Processing Fees : E-Procurement Portal ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವಂತೆ (91) ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿಳಾಸ, ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ರಜಾ ದಿನಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ : ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕುಟುಂಬ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಎಸ್.ಎಸ್. ಹೈಟೆಕ್ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆ ಹತ್ತಿರ, ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮ ನಗರರಸ್ತೆ, ಎನ್.ಸಿ.ಸಿ. ಕ್ಯಾಂಪ್ ಪಕ್ಕ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ–577005 ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08192–237833

ವಾಸಾಇ/ಡಿವಿಜಿ/626/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

ಸಹಿ/– ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕು.ಕ.ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ

BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560 020

No. BDA/EE/HPD-1/TEN/T-174/2025-26 Date: 07.01.2026

SHORT-TERM INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)-CALL-2
(Through GoK e-Procurement platform https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)

Short-term tender is invited for Providing Consultancy Services for Project Management and Quality Assurance with Marketing for the Construction of 3 BHK and 2 BHK Housing Project at Sy. No. 73, 76 and 2 of Kenchanapura Village in NPKL Layout on Lump Sum Turnkey Basis based on Tenderer's Own Design under two cover system invited by Bangalore Development Authority **(Indent No.: BDA/2025-26/SE0065/Call-2).** Tender schedule: **(1)** Date of availability of tender documents in e-portal: **07.01.2026. (2)** Last date and time for submission of tender Pre-bid enquiries: **12.01.2026, 3.00 p.m. (3)** Date & time of tender Pre-bid meeting: **14.01.2026, 3.00 p.m. (4)** Last date & time for submission of tender: **02.02.2026, 4.00 p.m. (5)** Date of opening of Technical bid of tender: **03.02.2026 after 4.30 p.m.** Interested bidders can view further details on **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and for more details it is requested to contact the Housing Project Division-1 of BDA during office hours.

Note: For any reason if there is delay in uploading the tender documents in e-portal, the revised/modified tender schedule will only be published in e-portal.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, HPD-1, BDA, Bengaluru

Classical tag not enough, Kannada research needs fresh lease of life

KDA pushes for autonomy to Mysuru's classical Kannada centre

PRATHIMA NANDAKUMAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Kannada is one of the many centres functioning under the Mysuru-based Central Institute of Indian Languages (in picture).

Twenty-two of the 55 scholarly volumes of classical Indian languages released by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan recently are in Kannada.

But that's brought little cheer to Kannada aficionados, who are pushing for an autonomous body to promote the cause of classical Kannada on the lines of Central Institute of Classical Tamil in Chennai.

Till date, the Centre has accorded classical status to 11 languages - Tamil (2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada and Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), Odia (2014), and in 2024, Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali.

Kannada was given classical language status on October 31, 2008 and the Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Kannada (CESCK) - set up in 2015 - has published 30 scholarly works and received central funding of Rs 11.46 crore (till 2024-25).

CESCK is one of the many centres functioning under the Mysuru-based Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), a part of the language bureau of the Ministry of Education.

Now, the Kannada Development Authority (KDA) has urged the Centre to bring CESCK out of CIIL's ambit to enable direct funding from the Centre.

"Last year, Education Minister (Pradhan), during our meeting, had assured us that all CoEs would be brought out of CIIL's control and developed as autonomous bodies. The move will greatly benefit the cause of developing classical Kannada as it can avail more central funds for new initiatives. Also, CIIL is a centre set up to study 22 scheduled languages and not literature," said KDA chairman Purushottham Bilimale.

The minister had also ruled out transferring any other CoE to state governments as was the case with Tamil Nadu, the chairman said.

The Tamil centre was moved out of Mysuru to Chennai in 2008, during the UPA rule as sought by the Tamil Nadu government and it became autonomous and was renamed as Central Institute of Classical Tamil.

According to the Ministry of Education records, the Tamil centre has received the highest funds - Rs 43 crore (2014-2024), Odia and Malayalam the least - Rs 3 crore. CESCK, which earlier functioned out of the CIIL premises, is operating out of a building provided by University of Mysore (UoM) in October 2020.

"The state government has zeroed in on 4 acres belonging to UoM for the proposed centre. However, CIIL should write to the Centre seeking to separate the Kannada centre. The autonomous body registered under the Societies Act can be directly funded by the Centre and it can move into its own building. The state government needs to provide 50% funding," said Bilimale.

He said he had approached Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Wadiyar to follow-up with the Centre.

During the conversation, the minister had mooted the idea of a new approach to promoting classical Kannada, which is presently a study of ancient Kannada by identifying its sources from the beginning till the end of 18th century. Besides documentation, digitisation, research and teaching, the language should be internationalised through translations.

"Classical Kannada is not frozen in time and space. The text is not static, be it 'Pampa Bharatha' or Ranna's 'Gadhaa Yuddha'. It inspired 'Gamaka Bhamini Shatpadi', a musical recitation style. Later, Dasa Sahitya was adopted for performance during Bhakti period. The same texts inspired temple architecture and were adopted for Yakshagana (dance drama)," said Bilimale.

"Classical text transformed and found its own way to survive. The new Kannada centre should pave the way for such experimentation," he added.

'None has right to tamper with basic structure of Constitution'

Eastern Range IGP Ravikanthe Gowda shares his views at the discussion "Constitution is Light," in Davangere. Professor Ashok Kumar Paled, Senior Civil Judge Mahavir Karennavar, Prajavani bureau chief Siddaiah Hiremath and social activist B M Niranjan are seen.

DAVANGERE, DHNS

CONSTITUTION IS LIGHT

Curated by DH DECCAN HERALD | ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ

The Constitution is supreme document and no one has the right to tamper with the basic structure of the Constitution, opined Senior Civil Judge Mahavir M Karennavar.

He was speaking at a panel discussion "Constitution is Light" organised by Social Welfare Department in association with Deccan Herald and Prajavani.

The judge said that while amending the Constitution is an uphill task, there was still room for it. Water, minerals, and funds cannot be distributed at one's will, he said.

"Mineral wealth is found in many states including Karnataka. "If we extract it, there will be no land for the next generation. As a result, water will not be available in the mining affected areas even when borewells are drilled beyond thousand feet. The environment should be respected first. Sustainability is very important."

Inspector General of Police (Eastern Range) B R Ravikanthe Gowda said that states also have a share in the resources. "Minerals are national wealth. The Green Bench of the Supreme Court has held that the people of the mining-affected areas should get a share in the natural wealth due to the environmental destruction caused by mining. Therefore, many types of funds have been for this purpose. The efforts to promote sustainable development and enhance green cover in mining-affected areas deserve appreciation. The Constitution intends that all resources should be used in the interest of the nation. The nation should develop by using natural resources. Both national development and local sustainability are important," he noted.

The IGP said that Constitution is working to eliminate social and geographical inequality. Reservation is a tool to eliminate inequality between individuals and regions. If Kalyana Karnataka does not develop, the entire state will not witness progress. Although there is a feeling among some sections of the society that the special status given to Kalyana Karnataka under Article 371 (J) is discrimination, it should be treated in a positive way.

He said that the Constitution has provided tools to resolve inter-state disputes. It will be beneficial to formulate a national water policy to resolve water disputes. He also noted that the federal system has worked hard to resolve border and water disputes.

Social activist B M Niranjan said that the major mineral resources including gold come under the purview of the Centre. Only stone quarries and sand come under the jurisdiction of the States. The Centre has more control over mineral resources.

Ashok Kumar V Paled, Head of Department, Political Science, Davangere University, remarked that the tax, mineral fund, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds set up to compensate damage due to mining activities have been effectively utilised in many states including Odisha. Such efforts must be effectively implemented in Karnataka, he suggested.

He said that although the Constitution has been framed on the model of the United States and Canada, more power has been conferred on the Centre in India. The Constitution, which is the mother of all laws, has a solution for everything.

Scan and watch complete round table discussion

An Initiative by:
SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT
For the Educational, Social & Economic Upliftment of Scheduled Castes

In Association with:

B'luru's budget homes gather dust as buyers...

Homebuyers, from Page 1

Homebuyers are looking for larger houses in the range of 1,600 sq ft to 2,000 sq ft for a 3BHK house and 1,200 sq ft for a 2BHK house. They are also looking for organised and branded builders rather than affordable houses, he said.

However, the real inventory stress lies at the bottom: Units priced below Rs 50 lakh now have a QTS of 20.3 quarters, compared to the overall 4.9 quarters for the city, signaling poor absorption.

"The old inventory is not aligned with current market trends. Homebuyers prefer modern amenities and location preferences. Buyers are preferring to stay closer to their workplaces and don't mind paying extra to get what they want," said Vivek Rathi, National Director-Research at Knight Frank India.

During 2025, the city witnessed sales of 55,373 units of all types.

The market realignment has crowned a new winner: North Bengaluru captured 34% of new launches and 33% of sales in 2025, dethroning East Bengaluru for the first time.

Infrastructure upgrades — Kempegowda International Airport, commercial projects and the upcoming Blue Line Metro — have transformed areas like Hebbal, Thanisandra, Jakkur and Airport Road from speculative bets into red-hot demand zones.

The message is clear: Bengaluru's homebuyers are voting with their wallets, and they're voting for space, amenities, and location over rock-bottom prices, Knight Frank said.

South Bengaluru retained its dominance with the inauguration of the Yellow Line Metro and rise of high-ticket size launches in micro-markets such as Begur, Sarjapur Road, and Electronics City.

Meanwhile, East Bengaluru, long regarded as the city's residential and commercial powerhouse, saw a marginal decline in its relative share to 27% of new launches and 30% of sales.

This dip is more a result of increased traction in the North, rather than waning demand in the East.

Super-speciality hospitals in all districts: CM

HAVERI, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar offers a piece of cake to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah as the latter broke the late Devaraj Urs' record as longest-serving chief minister, at the inauguration of Haveri Institute of Medical Sciences in Haveri on Wednesday. DH PHOTO/MALATHESH ICHCHANGI

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said super-speciality hospitals would be opened in every district of the state, including Haveri, to help the poor.

Speaking after inaugurating the Haveri Institute of Medical Sciences (HIMS) constructed in the city, he said that the number of poor in the state is high, and they do not have the financial capacity to go to private hospitals and bear expensive medical treatment. As everyone depends on government hospitals, super-speciality hospitals will be opened in every district, he added.

"Even when I was the deputy chief minister, I had spoken about super-speciality hospitals. Along with this, medical colleges, trauma centres, and cancer hospitals will also be started in every district," he added.

He further said, "There are 71 medical colleges in the state, of which 22 are government colleges. Government medical colleges will be opened in other places as well, including Vijayapura."

'Keep the word'

On the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar charged that the Centre should keep its word and provide funds for the state's irrigation projects.

"A few days ago, I had posted a message 'Word power is world power'. Keeping a given word is the greatest power in the world. Hence, the Centre should keep its word," he said.

'Let's see what the party decides'

Speaking to reporters, Siddaramaiah said he has come this far with the blessings of people, and the Congress high command will decide about his continuance as chief minister.

He expressed satisfaction with his administration. "I don't know how long I will stay. Let's see what high command decides," he said.

"The BJP government did not complete the construction of the HIMS building. We provided additional grants for the work after our government came to power and now the building has been inaugurated," he said.

He said the government has provided Rs 1,500 crore for the drinking water project in the district. "The BJP leaders don't work and just tell lies," he charged.

He said the removal of the banners led to the clash in Ballari. Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar has inspected the spot, he said.

To a question on the Hubballi stripping incident, the CM said the woman had misbehaved with police. No one should take law into their hands, he said, warning that legal action would be taken against such acts.

BJP workers say cops stripped woman; police deny charge

BJP workers, from Page 1

They said the Congress government had failed to protect the woman's honour. They demanded the suspension of the police inspector and other personnel and a counter-case against Suvarna.

As the protest continued into the evening, the police detained 16 BJP leaders, including mayor Jyothi Patil and deputy mayor Santosh Chavan.

Police commissioner N Shashi Kumar told reporters earlier that the woman herself had removed her clothes while being detained and had also attacked women police personnel. The police themselves arranged clothes for her, he said.

"A comprehensive inquiry led by deputy commissioner of police (Law and Order) Mahaning Nandaganvi will be conducted into all incidents from January 1 to 5. We will hold an inquiry if a complaint is filed specifically against the Keshwapur police. We will also probe who shot the video of the woman and circulated it," he said.

BJP MLA Mahesh Tenginakai said Sujata was showing houses to the BLO at Chalukya Nagar, but Congress leaders threatened her and lodged a police complaint. He said the police behaved inhumanly and demanded the suspension of those involved.

Meanwhile, District Incharge Minister Santosh Lad said the police were not at fault but there was evidence of the woman attacking policewomen and taking off her clothes on her own.

Corporator Suvarna Kallakuntla said Sujata and her family members are facing cases and should also be arrested.

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi and Belagavi MP Jagadish Shettar demanded action against the police personnel, accusing them of inhuman behaviour.

12th-century inscription reveals Hoysala–Tamil bond

Inscription, from Page 1

CESCK Project Director N M Talwar said the inscription accounts for a land grant by Karikudi Tillai Koottandi, a Dandanayaka (military commander) of Tamil origin.

Koottandi donated the village of Mudana Battahalli — present-day K Bettahalli — to support rituals and festivals at the Sri Vittirunda (Krishna) Temple, located at Sri Yadava Narayana Chaturvedi Mangala (modern Keretonnuru).

"This clearly shows that Tamilians occupied senior positions in the Hoysala military and were active patrons of temples across Karnataka. It reflects a deep, everyday connection between the two regions," Talwar said.

The discovery was made possible with local inputs, received by archaeologist Shashidhara, who realised the stone's value. The Mahalakshmi Temple has undergone an extensive renovation, erasing most of its original features.

Except for the inscription and a broken soapstone 'kalasha' found near the sanctum sanctorum, very little evidence remains to prove the temple's age.

"We also found an inscription on the pedestal of the goddess that reads 'Sri Mahalakshmi Deviyaru' in Hoysala script. If these remnants are lost, an 850-year-old history will vanish," Shashidhara said.

Archaeologist N S Rangaraju said that Koottandi's land grant was not a one-off act. "Records from nearby Tonnur (Kere) indicate that the commander had earlier purchased the land for 80 gadyanas to donate it to the same deity. These findings show a shared past, where language, power, and faith cross regional boundaries with ease," he said.

India's GDP growth projected at 7.4% in FY26: NSO

GDP, from Page 1

"Total expenditure is also expected to be lower, leading to a fiscal deficit of Rs 15.85 lakh crore compared to the budgeted Rs 15.69 lakh crore. With the new GDP figure, the fiscal deficit as a percentage of GDP is likely to remain unchanged at 4.4%," Ghosh added.

Services sector growth is estimated to accelerate to 9.1% in the current financial year from 7.2% in the previous year. All the sub-sectors under services are estimated to grow at a higher pace, compared to last year.

However, a significant deceleration is projected in the agriculture sector, with real growth falling to 3.1% in 2025-26 from 4.6% in the previous year.

Nominal growth rate of gross value added (GVA) of agriculture and allied activities is estimated to dip to a record low of 0.8% in the current financial year from 10.4% recorded in the last fiscal.

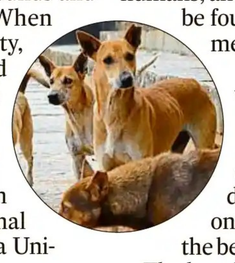
This is because of a sharp drop in food price inflation. While the low inflation has provided relief to consumers, it has impacted farmers negatively by hitting their earnings.

As per the NSO data, India's real GDP is estimated to grow to Rs 201.90 lakh crore in 2025-26 from Rs 187.97 lakh crore in the previous year. The nominal GDP is estimated to grow to Rs 357.14 lakh crore in the current fiscal from Rs 330.68 lakh crore recorded in 2024-25.

The per capita national income is estimated to increase by Rs 16,025 this year to Rs 2,47,487.

Not just bites, dogs on roads pose hazards, says SC

Dogs, from Page 1



"How would you identify which dog is in which mood in the morning," the bench asked.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal for animal rights groups said dogs lived in compounds and in universities. "When I was in university, there were dogs and none bit me, and many dogs are in Jawaharlal Nehru University," he said.

"Your information is outdated. National Law School of India University, Bengaluru has reported many attacks," the bench said.

Emphasising that there should be an exercise to prevent dog bite incidents, the bench said, "Nobody is saying that remove the dogs and shoot them, no...roads have to be clear of dogs."

Sibal contended that putting all dogs in the shelter is not the solution, it is physically not possible and economically not feasible, and dangerous for humans, and a solution has to be found by a scientific methodology.

"The only thing which is left out is providing counselling to the dog as well that the dog should not bite once released back," the bench said.

The bench said as far as institutions are concerned, they are not streets. "Why do you need dogs in court premises, universities," the bench asked.

The court pointed out that rules say they have to be released back in the same area. "How will the institutions be dog-free? Should they be released on the streets," the bench asked.

The court expressed its discontent with the NHAI shifting responsibility on states for clearing the stretches with dogs, saying it is a serious issue as in the past 20 days, two judges met with accidents on highways due to stray animals.

The court had on November 7, 2025 said that against the backdrop of alarming rise in dog bite incidents within institutional areas like educational institutions, hospitals, sports complexes, bus stands and railway stations, it is essential to issue directions in the interest of public safety, health and management of stray dogs and directed that such canines should be moved to designated shelters.

Cutting Bannerghatta ESZ...

Bannerghatta ESZ, from Page 1

The report said the BNP, together with three wildlife sanctuaries in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, forms a contiguous forest complex of about 3,000 sq km. It harbours 100 elephants seasonally and has three elephant corridors connecting Karadikkal-Madeshwara corridor, Tali-Bilikal corridor and Bilikal-Jowlagiri corridor. The 2011 guidelines of the MoEF are clear that revenue areas should be part of ESZ if they are part of the wildlife corridors.

The CEC further noted that ESZ reduction was taken by a Cabinet sub-committee rather than the expert committee, in violation of the guidelines. It said the MoEF&CC needs to "withdraw" the ESZ notification.

"The original ESZ extent of 268.96 sq km as proposed in the 2016 draft notification shall be fully restored," it said, adding that the "entire exercise" to renotify the ESZ shall be completed in six months.

It said the identified elephant corridors and ecologically important patches within the Bannerghatta landscape cannot be curtailed merely on the ground of proximity to urban or peri-urban development, as such curtailment would irreversibly disrupt habitat continuity and defeat the very object of ESZ framework.

Environmentalist Kiran Urs said the government's failure to follow the ESZ guidelines of 2011 has resulted in damage to the sensitive area. "The government should assess the damage that has happened within the 4.5 km buffer zone. The entire landscape needs to be restored to prevent further damage and wildlife conflicts," he said.

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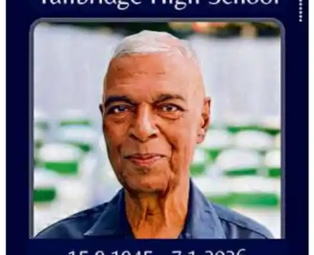
Ernest Shaw
President
Tunbridge High School



15.9.1945 - 7.1.2026
"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
2 Timothy 4:7
Mourned by the Board of Governors, Principal, Staff and Students of Tunbridge High School, Bangalore.
Funeral service on 08.1.2026 @ 10 a.m. at St. John's Church
Burial at Kalpalli cemetery

RESPECTFUL HOMAGE

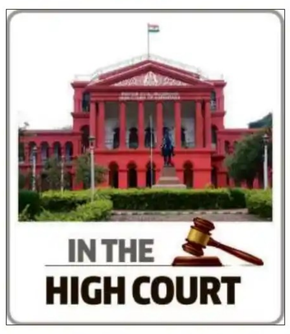
Mrs. R.A. DEVI

On the occasion of our Founder's 51st death anniversary, we solemnly promise to promote the cause of better education. We cherish her memory as a source of inspiration to carry out her noble mission.

Members of Sri Kumaran Children's Home Educational Council, Principal, Staff and Students of Nursery / State/ ICSE / CBSE / PU College, Bangalore.

Kogilu demolition: File detailed affidavit, HC tells state

AG refutes residents' claim on living there for 30 yrs



BENGALURU, DHNS

The high court on Wednesday asked the government to file a comprehensive affidavit/statement in the PIL seeking adequate rehabilitation and accommodation to all 3,000 plus affected persons in the Kogilu layout demolition.

Advocate General (AG) Shashikiran Shetty informed the court that three areas had been earmarked to relocate the residents temporarily.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C M Poonacha ordered notice to the state and other authorities for further consideration.

The petition is filed by Zaiba Tabassum and three others, all residents of Kogilu layout.

The petitioners claimed that the affected residents had been residing in two colonies - Fakeer Colony and Waseem Colony - for approximately 30 years, with many households possessing valid title deeds granted by competent authorities. The petition stated that the houses in both the colonies were demolished on December 20, 2025, without prior notice.

The petition said that the affected persons, including women, children, the elderly and the disabled are living in vulnerable and unsafe conditions requiring urgent state intervention.

The petition also sought directions to conduct a survey to identify all affected people and their eligibility for rehabilitation.

At the hearing, AG refuted claims that the residents had been living there for 30 years and said that there are satellite images to show when each of the houses were built.

He said that the procedures stated by the petitioners citing an Apex Court judgement does not apply to the government land in question.

The land is a quarry site, used by erstwhile BBMP as a landfill site for dumping garbage.

When the bench posed a query to the AG on the temporary shelter, the AG said that the affected people have been provided food through Indira canteen and that other amenities will also be provided.

"Advocate General appears and states that three areas have been earmarked where residents of the said colonies can be relocated on temporary basis, till further orders. The AG also states that residents, on being relocated to these areas, would also be provided food and other possible amenities. The said statement is taken on record," the bench said, adjourning the matter to January 22.

REVA University holds Founder's Day

Air Chief Marshal Fali Homi Major receives the REVA Lifetime Achievement Award. Seen (left to right) Dr Sanjay R Chitnis, Jayasudha, Dr P Shyama Raju, Nirupama Menon Rao, Umesh S Raju and Dr M Dhanamjaya.

REVA University held its Founder's Day on January 6. The annual event is held to coincide with the birthday of Dr P Shyama Raju, Chancellor. Air Chief Marshal Fali Homi Major, former Chief of the Air Staff; Nirupama Menon Rao, Diplomat, former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador; and actor Jayasudha were honoured with the prestigious REVA Lifetime Achievement Award.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Shyama Raju reflected on his inspiring journey - from growing up in a small village in Andhra Pradesh to founding REVA University. "Founder's Day has evolved into a meaningful annual tradition that celebrates excellence and service. We honour eminent personalities from diverse fields, recognising their outstanding contributions to society. The REVA Lifetime Achievement Award is our way of expressing gratitude to individuals whose life and work continue to inspire generations," he said.

Air Chief Marshal Fali Homi Major expressed gratitude and reflected on the principles that shaped his distinguished career. Everything he achieved stemmed from professionalism, unwavering commitment and consistent hard work, he said.

Nirupama Menon Rao observed that universities are never created by accident. She described them as temples of learning - acts of collective belief that education must shape not only professional ambition, but also a deep sense of responsibility. She also said learning is considered a pilgrimage, not merely transactional.

Jayasudha said she was deeply honoured to receive the award. Reflecting on her journey in cinema, she noted that every film she acted in reminded her of the responsibility she owed to her audience and well-wishers. This moment, she said, reaffirmed her belief that excellence is rooted in integrity, perseverance and unwavering commitment.

As part of Founder's Day celebrations, REVA University unveiled RIA - the REVA Intelligent Assistant, an AI-powered humanoid developed in-house by REVA's students and faculty, marking a significant milestone in the university's innovation-led academic journey.

REVA University's pro chancellor Umesh S Raju, vice chancellor Dr Sanjay R Chitnis and registrar Dr M Dhanamjaya, along with trustees, faculty and guests attended the event.

Curated by DH Brandspot

SDPI's national council meeting in M'luru on Jan 20, 21

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) will hold its 6th National Representative Council meeting at Mangaluru in Dakshina Kannada district from January 20-21.

The conference will mark the election of the national executive committee and national office-bearers for the upcoming term.

According to a press note issued by the SDPI, the organisational elections have already been conducted in 14 states, with new office-bearers being appointed.

"The national representative conference to be held in Mangaluru is expected to serve as a platform that provides clear direction for the country's political future," the note added.

A TAPESTRY OF LIGHT

As part of the Gavisiddeshwar Mutt car festival in Koppal, a fireworks display created a dazzling tapestry of light across the sky late on Tuesday night.
DH PHOTO/BHARATH KANDAKUR

BU rejects CBSE's request for land on Jnana Bharati campus

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bangalore University has decided against granting land on its Jnana Bharati campus to the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) for a regional office. Furthermore, the varsity has decided against entertaining such pleas for land from other institutions in the future.

The CBSE's plea for land was tabled for discussion at a recent meeting of the BU syndicate wherein it was decided not to provide land for the board or any other agency. The syndicate's decision was motivated by considerations of requirement of land for the varsity's expansion in the future.

In the aftermath of the varsity's trifurcation, seven departments that previously operated out of Central College had been shifted to the Jnana Bharati campus. "We need land to accommodate these seven departments on the campus," said the member.

Varsity officials also informed the syndicate that one acre previously allotted to the National Council for Teachers Education had been given to the CBSE. "So, we cannot grant more land to CBSE," said the official.

Meanwhile, syndicate members have asked officials to furnish information about land on Jnana Bharati campus allotted to various institutions at the next meeting.

In fact, prior to rejecting the CBSE's request for land, BU had also turned down a plea from the Council of Architecture, which had sought two acres. In fact, the varsity had also refused the Central University of Karnataka's request seeking 25 acres for a research centre.

In 2023, the varsity revised the guidelines for leasing its land, deciding to increase the lease amount by 10% annually, besides fixing Rs 50,000 as the minimum amount to be paid for lease

832 acres with varsity

- Total land: 1201.24 acre
- Land available as per station survey :1184.16 acres
- Land utilised by University: 832 acres
- Land awarded to other institutions: 281.06 acres
- Institutions using excess land: 40 acres
- Land given to BMRCL: 0.36 acre
- Land given to UVCE: 52.01 acre

Two arrested for building and selling 'illegal' houses on govt land

BENGALURU, DHNS

A view of the unauthourised structures at Kogilu in the city.

Police have arrested two people for encroaching on government land in Kogilu, north Bengaluru, where about 160 unauthorised houses were built, allegedly after collecting money from residents.

The police action followed a complaint by Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) engineer Santosh Kumar Kaddi, who stated that 14 acres and 36 guntas of land in Survey Number 99 was transferred following orders issued by the Bengaluru Urban deputy commissioner in 2014 and 2015 and was later earmarked for civic infrastructure projects, including a bio-methanation unit, sewage treatment plant and waste-processing facilities.

In 2023, Bengaluru Smart City/BSWLR Ltd floated tenders and issued work orders for the proposed projects. However, nearly four acres of the land were found to have been illegally encroached upon, with makeshift houses constructed without authorisation.

He accused four individuals — Vijay, Waseemullah Beg, Robin and Muni Anjanappa — of taking money from residents to construct the illegal houses.

The Yelahanka police arrested Vijay and Beg on Wednesday for questioning and are making efforts to trace others allegedly involved in collecting money and facilitating the illegal occupation.

Following directions from the competent authorities, a joint operation involving the district administration, police and civic officials was conducted on December 20, 2025, during which around 160 unauthorised structures were identified.

FIR over 'anti-govt' slogans

Police have also registered a case against some social activists who staged a protest at the demolition site on December 20 and allegedly blared anti-government slogans on a loudspeaker and barged into a government school. The police claim that the protest was conducted without prior permission.

Conmen pose as senior KMF officials, cheat job aspirants of Rs 50 lakh

BENGALURU, DHNS: Two men claiming to be senior officials in the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) allegedly cheated several people of Rs 50 lakh by promising them jobs without examinations or interviews.

The Malleshwaram police have registered an FIR based on a complaint from Karigouda S Patil, whose relatives lost money to the "slick" scam.

His advocate Owaiz Hussain S confirmed the complaint.

Patil alleged that the suspects — N Krishnan and his associate Nagaraj — collected large sums of money between December 2022 and December 2023, claiming they were authorised by the state government to recruit candidates for the KMF.

Krishnan allegedly introduced himself as a senior KAS officer and KMF director, while Nagaraj claimed to hold a senior position in the federation. The suspects allegedly showed KMF identity cards and newspaper advertisements published in October 2022, claiming that 487 posts would be filled shortly, of which 25 posts would be directly recruited by them.

Believing the claims, Patil shared the information with some of his relatives and acquaintances. He alleged that Rs 36 lakh was transferred through bank accounts while Rs 14 lakh was paid in cash during two meetings held at a hotel in Malleshwaram.

The complainant further alleged that the suspects sent emails in the name of KMF, calling candidates for interviews in Mysuru, lending credibility to the purported recruitment process by issuing fake offer letters.

In March 2024, the two suspects allegedly executed agreements with 10 candidates and issued cheques as assurance, stating that the amount would be refunded if jobs were not provided.

But despite repeated assurances, appointment letters were never issued. The suspects allegedly delayed the process, citing a change in government, and later demanded additional payments.

In May 2025, the suspects allegedly claimed they were acting on instructions to collect more money and falsely stated that the ministers concerned had sought additional amounts, demanding up to Rs 25 lakh per candidate for immediate issuance of appointment letters.

When the complainant refused to pay further and sought a refund, the suspects allegedly warned that neither jobs nor refunds would be given unless more money was paid. Their mobile phones have been unreachable for the past three months.

The Malleshwaram police said they were examining supporting documents, including bank statements, agreements, cheques and emails, and would take further action after verification.

BJP MLA claims social media accounts hacked, files plaint

BENGALURU, DHNS: Jayanagar MLA C K Ramamurthy on Wednesday filed a complaint with CEN South police alleging that his Facebook ID was hacked and a fake account was created on Instagram to send random messages to women using his account.

According to Ramamurthy, the hackers sent "good morning" messages to a woman. He approached the police seeking legal action and deletion of the fake Instagram account created in his name, besides the restoration of his hacked Facebook ID.

Speaking to *DH*, Ramamurthy said that the act was aimed at damaging his political career. "To damage my image, miscreants hacked my Facebook ID and also created a fake account in my name. They demanded money to release the account while random messages were sent to girls through Instagram to malign me," he added.

The MLA further claimed that he suspected the involvement of some Congress workers behind the incident. "I believe some Congress workers are behind this to damage my political career," he alleged.

Ramamurthy said he failed to notice the hacking initially as he was busy attending to a relative who was hospitalised following an accident. "I came to know about the incident only after my followers alerted me. Soon after that, I filed a complaint with the police," he added. The police said that they were looking into the complaint.

Crimes against women becoming more ghastly: Rameshwari Verma

BENGALURU, DHNS

Members of All India Mahila Samskrutika Sanghatane take part in a state-level convention on crimes against women and children at Gandhi Bhavan in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

The Karnataka state committee of the All India Mahila Samskrutika Sanghatane (AIMSS) organised a state-level convention on crimes against women and children at the Gandhi Bhavan here on Wednesday.

The convention revolved around the theme of "bringing a change in the system".

Speaking at the event, popular theatre artiste Rameshwari Verma expressed serious concern at the present scenario where crimes against women were becoming more grotesque, perverse and ghastly.

The state secretary of SUCI (C), K Uma, stressed the need for women to speak up.

"Today's society has reduced women to a commodity to satisfy male desire. Her real virtue, her values and knowledge are not recognised at all," she said.

Uma called upon womenfolk to be more and more organised and raise their voice for rightful equality and bring in a cultural change in society.

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PERSONAL
Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, RAGHAVENDRA, residing at # 64, 22nd Cross, 24th Main, HSR Layout, Sector-2, Parangipalya, Bengaluru- 560102, have changed my name to ARVIND RAGHAV vide affidavit 06.11.2026 before notary Dharani P, Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called as ARVIND RAGHAV only

CHANGE OF NAME
I, SHREYA HANUBALU DHARMARAJU, SHREYA DHARMARAJU residing at No.7, Datatreya Temple, Near SLV Mart, T.G.Layout, Ittamadu, Bangalore South – 560085, declare that the above name pertain to me only. Henceforth I shall be known as SHREYA DHARMARAJU, vide affidavit dt. 03-01-2026 before notary M. Ananthamurthy, Mysuru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, SHWETHA KUMARI W/o Sri Lingayya Hiremat, R/at No. 11, V Temple View Layout, Samskruthi Street, 3rd Cross, Kodipalya Main Road, Kengeri, Bengaluru-560060, have changed my name to SHWETHA HIREMAT vide affidavit dated 31-12-2025 before notary Ravi, Bengaluru.

I, ZAREENA BEGUM residing at Ward No. 14, Kandavara, Chickballapur- 562101, have changed my name to ZAREEN BEGUM vide affidavit dated 07.01.2026 before Notary K.H. Venkatappa, Chickballapur.

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SRI SIDDARAMAIAH

Karnataka's longest serving chief minister

Leading Karnataka to progress and prosperity

Curated by DH Brandspot

Politics with welfare of the masses at the core

Many people in our village had dry land. Very few people could grow rice. Only those who grew rice used to eat rice. People with dry land used to eat rice only during festivals and holidays. When their children were unwell at home, they had to wait at other people's doorsteps for rice. This had a huge impact on me. That is why, as soon as I became chief minister, I implemented the 'Anna Bhagya' scheme, to make the dream of a hunger-free State a reality
- Sri Siddaramaiah

Sri Siddaramaiah's political journey is an inspiring story of determination, deep-rooted care for the weaker sections and financial acumen that makes welfare schemes possible, writes **Nagaraju Ashwath**

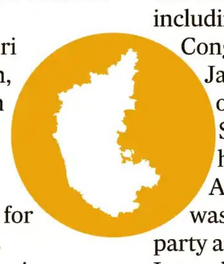
Yes, Sri Siddaramaiah, who was sworn in as the chief minister for the first time in 2013, had launched the 'Anna Bhagya' scheme in the State as promised. He brought to life the concept of a hunger-free State by distributing free rice to more than 1.50 crore families across the State. He also launched the revolutionary 'Ksheera Bhagya' scheme where the government bought milk from KMF farmers and distributed it among children in schools. Later, he started various progressive schemes, attracting the attention of the State and nation.

Fighting spirit

Sri Siddaramaiah is a law student. He came in contact with Prof M D Nanjundaswamy, a teacher at the law college. Sri Siddaramaiah has stated, "Sri Nanjundaswamy was my lecturer when I was studying law in Mysuru. He was the main reason behind my developing a fighting spirit and the ability to protest against injustice. As soon as college ended at 10 am, he would take me to Hotel Gayathri Bhavan near the court and teach me politics till 1 pm. That is how the quality of protesting against governments and fighting against injustice developed in me".

Interestingly, Sri Siddaramaiah later served as a guest lecturer at Vidyavardhaka College in Mysuru for three years.

Power behind Ahinda convention



It was 1999. Sri Siddaramaiah, who had been campaigning across the State and seeking votes for his party, was hopeful of winning. However, he was defeated in his own constituency. He was quite upset by this defeat and accepted it as a challenge. He lived in a rented house in Bengaluru for five years and travelled across the State, engaging in party organisation.

Later, in 2004, he won and was elected as deputy chief minister. He then decided to organise an Ahinda convention in Hubballi. The programme was attended by leaders, including the then Congress leader R L Jalappa. Despite opposition, Sri Siddaramaiah, who had organised the Ahinda convention, was expelled from the party and from power. Later, he continued the Ahinda organisation through the Congress party.

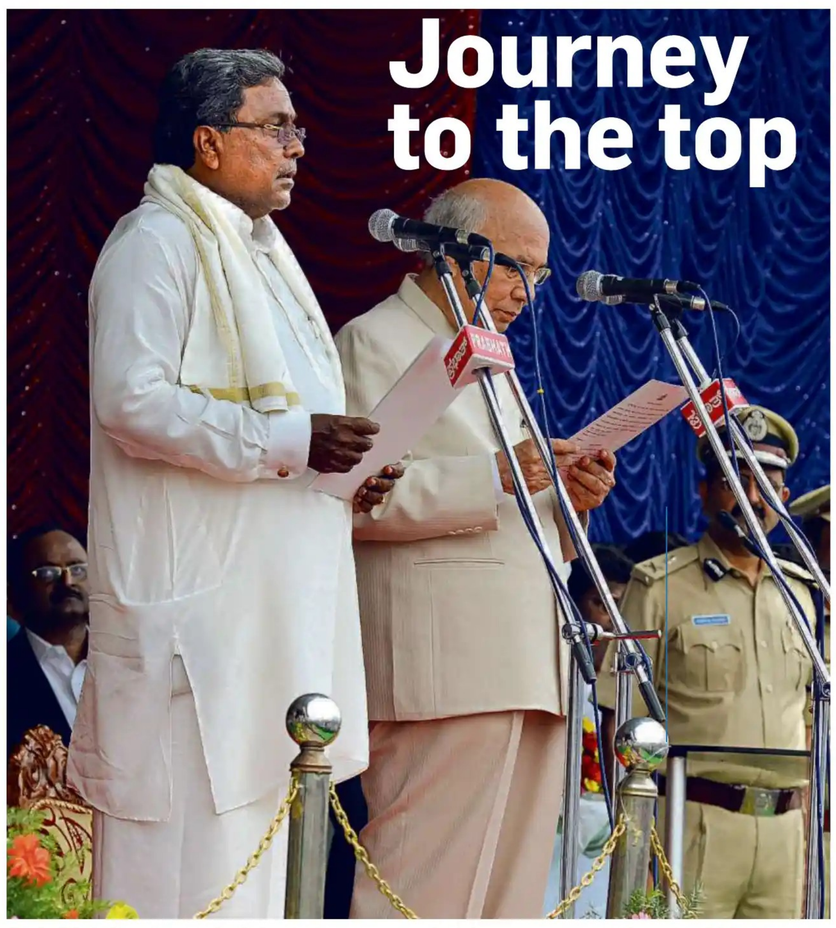
Education on sand!

Sri Siddaramaiah has presented 16 Budgets as chief minister and finance minister. His knowledge and insight into funds coming to the state treasury and expenditure is commendable. He takes crucial decisions such as grants to be allocated for projects etc efficiently.

However, Sri Siddaramaiah did not get these accounting lessons from school. As a child, he could not go to school and was limited to learning dance at Veeramakala. His teacher, Sri Nanjegowda, also taught Sri Siddaramaiah and his friends how to write in Kannada and to calculate, on sand. Later, as a result of this and the efforts of another teacher Sri Rajappa, Sri Siddaramaiah enrolled directly in the 5th Standard and continued his education.

SRI SIDDARAMAIAH

Born:	August 12, 1948
Parents:	Siddarama Gowda, Boramma
Town:	Siddaramahundi, Mysuru District
Education:	BSc, LLB
Wife:	Parvati
Children:	Yathindra Siddaramaiah and late Rakesh Siddaramaiah



Journey to the top

Sri Siddaramaiah's journey from 1978 when he entered politics to his present position as chief minister is dotted with achievements and unique initiatives. **Nagaraju Ashwath** presents a bird's eye view of his illustrious career as a mass leader

Sri Siddaramaiah's political journey from lawyer and lecturer to an MLA, minister, deputy chief minister and chief minister has taken many turns.

Here's a sketch of his journey from entry to the top post:

1978: Entered politics as a member of Mysuru Taluk Board

1983: Elected to the Legislative Assembly from Chamundeshwari constituency as an Indian Lok Dal candidate

1985: Won the election for the second time and became Minister for Animal Husbandry in the Sri Ramakrishna Hegde government

1994: Sri Ramakrishna Hegde took charge as the finance minister in the cabinet and presented the State budget.

1996 and **2004:** Served as the deputy chief minister of the State during the tenure of Sri J H Patel and Sri Dharam Singh

2009-13 and **2019-23:** Served as leader of the opposition

2013: Served as CM for the first time

2023: The Congress party formed the government again with a majority and he became the chief minister for the second time

Achievements as deputy CM

Year	Government	Party
1996	In the Sri J H Patel government	Janata Dal
2004	In the Sri Dharam Singh coalition government)	JD(S)

Entry into Congress and milestones

In 2006, Sri Siddaramaiah quit the JD(S) and joined the Congress. In the 2006 by-election, he contested the Chamundeshwari constituency as a Congress candidate and won.

Two terms as chief minister

Sri Siddaramaiah is one of the few chief ministers in the history of Karnataka to have completed a full five-year term.

First term (2013-2018): Sri Siddaramaiah became the chief minister for the first time when the Congress won 122 seats in the 2013 elections.

Second term (2023 - present): Sri Siddaramaiah was sworn in as chief minister for the second time on May 20, 2023, after the Congress won a thumping majority with 135 seats in the 2023 elections.

At the polls

Year	Constituency	Result	Party
1983	Chamundeshwari	Won	Independent (Lok Dal supports)
1985	Chamundeshwari	Won	Janata Party
1989	Chamundeshwari	Lost	Janata Dal
1994	Chamundeshwari	Won	Janata Dal
1999	Chamundeshwari	Lost	JD(S)
2004	Chamundeshwari	Won	JD(S)
2008	Varuna	Won	Congress
2013	Varuna	Won	Congress
2018	Badami	Won	Congress
2023	Varuna	Won	Congress

Guarantee of transparent governance

The five guarantee schemes of **Sri Siddaramaiah** have earned him the love and respect of the masses, especially the weaker sections. His governance is able and transparent, writes **M Veerappa Moily**, former chief minister and senior Congress leader

During the tenure of Sri D Devaraj Urs, many schemes and land reforms were initiated by the government in favour of the poor, Dalits and minorities in the State. In the same vein, pro-poor schemes have been implemented by the Congress government every time it came to power. After the arrival of Sri Siddaramaiah, more pro-people and pro-poor schemes have been launched. In particular, schemes such as 'Anna Bhagya' and 'Ksheera Bhagya' have won the hearts of the people. That is why the people of Karnataka love and respect Sri Siddaramaiah.

The Congress party has always been concerned about the weaker sections of society. The party has continued its pro-people policy. Karnataka has become the first State in the country to implement the largest number of pro-people schemes – the five guarantees. The national leadership of the Congress and senior leaders have extended wholehearted support to the projects. All the schemes implemented by the Sri Siddaramaiah-led Congress government have been widely welcomed. The grants given by the government for the 'Anna Bhagya', 'Griha Lakshmi', 'Gruha Jyothi', 'Yuva Nidhi' and 'Shakti' schemes are coming back to the government's exchequer in the form of higher per capita income. These special schemes of the Congress government have been very helpful in alleviating poverty in the State.

Sri Siddaramaiah was welcomed warmly when he came into the Congress party. The party cadres supported him in his role as leader. There are no allegations of corruption and there is transparent governance. The benefits of the five guarantee schemes he initiated in the State are reaching the people directly, without any middleman.

Personally, I am very happy with Sri Siddaramaiah's administration.

His ability to connect with the people is amazing

Actor **Ramesh Aravind** remembers the occasion when **Sri Siddaramaiah** made an appearance on his TV show

Be it cinema, business or politics, it is very challenging to maintain one's position for many years. Sri Siddaramaiah's journey in politics is truly special. It is a matter of great pride that he is continuing as the chief minister for the longest time after Sri D Devaraj Urs.

At the 'Weekend with Ramesh' show, his eloquence, ability to attract everyone and the way he connected with the people was amazing. After all, there is no judge greater than time. He continues to be the chief minister. He has earned the love of the people.

On this occasion, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to him.

An uncompromising move against communalism

Sri Siddaramaiah has led the implementation of welfare schemes from the front in both his tenures, says actor **Prakash Raj**

Sri Siddaramaiah is likable for many reasons. He is one of the few people who takes an uncompromising stand against communalism. Significantly, he did not come from a privileged background. Sri Siddaramaiah, who has faced hardships, led the implementation of welfare schemes including 'Anna Bhagya' and 'Ksheera Bhagya' in both his tenures.

These schemes cannot be compared with the achievements of Sri D Devaraj Urs as their times are different. Sri Devaraj Urs ruled in the pre-globalisation and liberalisation period. The land reforms he implemented were the biggest pro-poor programmes ever initiated. In the post-liberalisation era, projects such as 'Bhagya Yojana' are very important.

I wish the pro-poor objectives of Sri Siddaramaiah are fulfilled and the government machinery continues to be transparent and pro-people.

Sri Siddaramaiah's deep knowledge of finance has benefitted all sections

Sri Siddaramaiah has presented 16 Budgets and his financial acumen has led to the upliftment of weaker sections across the State, says **Dr M R Seetharam**, MLC and former minister

There's hardly any need to highlight Sri Siddaramaiah's governance and pro-people initiatives. His performance in the last two terms has been highly appreciated by the people of the State. When Sri Siddaramaiah joined the Congress party in 2006, and organised the Ahinda Samavesha, many were ready to follow him as he treated everyone, including activists from all sections, very cordially without any discrimination. He considers everyone as his own. This is the reason behind the success of Ahinda Samavesha. It was so successful that Sri Siddaramaiah came to be popularly known as Ahinda Nayaka.

I have worked with him very closely while formulating three Budgets. His contribution to plans without any compromise on priority to the welfare of all sections is immense. Sri Siddaramaiah has powered an increase in the per capita income of the people of the State. The implementation of the pro-people guarantees has led to financial benefits for all. Thus, economic transactions have increased in the State. This has paved the way for economic growth.

It is because of this financial ingenuity that Sri Siddaramaiah has been able to present 16 Budgets. During Sri Siddaramaiah's tenures the weaker sections have benefitted and have been uplifted. The straightforward, bold Sri Siddaramaiah is currently leading everyone. I hope this administration continues to grow and the party too continues to grow under his leadership.

HDK slams DCM for holding meeting with cops in Ballari

Calls it interference in Parameshwara's home department

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Slamming Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar for holding a meeting with senior police officers during his visit to Ballari on Tuesday, Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Wednesday said this amounted to nothing but direct interference by the deputy chief minister in the home department, a portfolio held by senior minister G Parameshwara.

"Why did the deputy chief minister convene a meeting of police officers in Ballari? Who gave him that authority? Is there no home minister in the state? Is the present home minister mere figurehead?," he said, speaking to reporters.

The JD(S) leader said, "A deputy chief minister is still just a minister. What information will the officials give to the Congress fact-finding committee? The party workers and the Congress leaders themselves have filed complaints with the fact-finding committee against the MLA responsible who was for the incident of violence in which a Congress worker lost his life."

He said the government was trying to cover up the incident in Ballari city.

Hasty cremation

"Why was the body of the murdered party worker cremated in haste after the post-mortem, without even allowing the family to perform the final rites? Shouldn't the government answer?" he said.

"There is jungle raj in Karnataka. This is an extremely serious case. Why is the chief minister maintaining silence on this? Has it reached a point when even if your own MLA orchestrates a murder, no one dares to question it?," he said.

2 doctors for post-mortem

"As stated by the director of the Ballari Institute of Medical Sciences hospital, Dr Yogeesh initially began post-mortem. As it was reportedly delayed, another doctor Dr Chetan was called in. Why was he summoned? On whose orders was he called? For the first time in history, 2 doctors were brought in to conduct post mortem. Why did this happen? Who exerted pressure? To protect whom all this was done?," he said.

Hits back at Priyank

Responding to Minister Priyank Kharge's criticism against him, the JD(S) leader said, "What is the contribution you (Priyank) and your father (Mallikarjun Kharge) made to the Gurmitkal Assembly constituency?"\

"Leave Kalyana Karnataka aside. One look at your constituency and it becomes clear what development works you have undertaken," he said.

Clash effect: Ballari gets new Inspector General, Superintendent of Police

Govt tells them to act firmly to restore law and order

BALLARI, DHNS

Major changes have been effected at the range and the district police level following the clash on New Year's Day, which resulted in the death of Congress worker Rajashekhar.

Range Deputy Inspector General of Police Varthika Katiyar has been transferred, and 2004-batch IPS officer P S Harsha has been appointed as the new Inspector General of Police (IGP).

Suman Pannekar, a 2013-batch IPS officer who was serving as Deputy Commissioner of Police (Intelligence), has been appointed as the new Superintendent of Police (SP). Pavan Nejjur, who was appointed as SP on December 31, was suspended following the clash. Chitradurga SP Ranjith Bandaru was in charge for some time.

Harsha inspects the spot

Soon after assuming charge on Wednesday, IGP Harsha visited Avvambavi, where the clash occurred, and inspected the spot. He gathered information from officials and issued suggestions and directions. New SP Suman Pannekar is likely to assume charge on Thursday.

IGP P S Harsha visits the incident site and discusses with officials after assuming charge in Ballari on Wednesday. DH PHOTO

"I have just assumed charge and held a brief meeting with officials. In view of several incidents that have taken place in Ballari, I have received very clear directions. The government and senior officers have instructed us to take impartial action. Detailed information regarding recent incidents will be collected, investigations will be conducted and necessary action will be taken," he said.

"The Ballari clash needs to be examined. There will be discussions with officers. After new SP takes charge, I will discuss other issues," he added.

BJP releases video

MLA Janardhana Reddy released a video, which shows that during the clash at Avvambavi on Jan 1, a private bodyguard fired at Rajashekhar.

In response, videos related to the incident were also released from the office of MLA Bharath Reddy. One of the videos purportedly shows a person standing atop Janardhana Reddy's house.

It's jungle raj under Cong: BYV

BENGALURU, DHNS: BJP State President B Y Vijayendra on Wednesday lashed out at the Congress, alleging that a BJP woman worker was "assaulted" and "disrobed" in Hubballi.

He told reporters that the BJP "condemns" the action of "assaulting" a BJP worker while arresting her and urged the Home minister to suspend police officers responsible for it.

Taking to X (formerly Twitter), Vijayendra said: "The disgraceful incident that has transpired in Hubballi, where a woman @BJP4Karnataka karyakarta was subjected to assault and humiliation, is deeply disturbing and utterly shameful. This is a grave assault on the dignity and modesty of a woman, striking at the very conscience of our civilised society."

Alleging that Karnataka was slipping into a "Vendetta-driven Jungle Raj," he said the incident exposes a complete collapse of the rule of law under the present regime.

Priyank rebukes 'no Cong without Siddu' statement

BENGALURU, DHNS

Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge on Wednesday rebuked senior lawmaker K N Rajanna for saying that Congress would cease to exist in Karnataka without Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Rajanna had said on Tuesday that there was no Congress without Siddaramaiah. He has said this earlier, too. "You need Congress for the 'B' form, you need Congress' leadership during the election campaign and you want Congress' ideology. But after winning and coming to power, saying such things is wrong," Priyank said, without naming Rajanna. He was, however, responding to a question about Rajanna's statement.

"The party is not by, or for, individuals. None must forget that we (leaders) are here because of workers. Without workers, neither am I a leader nor anyone else," Priyank said. "Congress has been around for 140 years. Growth of leadership is a continuous process," he said. Asked about delays in appointing Congress workers to boards and corporations, Priyank said they must have patience. "Everyone won't get opportunities at once. They'll get their chance. We've already appointed chairpersons to boards and corporations. The appointment of directors is pending. While 85% of the process is done, the rest will be done," he said.

Priyank cited the example of his father, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge. "One needs to have patience in politics. There's no bigger example than Kharge for hard work and patience," he said.

'RSS is unregulated, unconstitutional'

IT/BT and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge continued his tirade against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) after a special court issued notices to him and other Congress leaders in a defamation case.

"Intimidation is their tactic. RSS is an unregistered, unregulated and unconstitutional body. Why should we be scared? I follow the Buddha-Basava ideology. Ambedkar's struggle is in my blood," Priyank said.

Priyank, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao and Youth Congress leader Mohammed Haris Nalapad have been given notices in connection with a complaint that they made 'defamatory' comments on RSS.

"Why won't they (RSS) get registered? Where are they getting funds from? Why does (RSS chief) Mohan Bhagwat get advance security liaison at taxpayers' expense? Cases are being filed because we're asking these questions," Priyank said, adding that the truth would come out someday. "It's not that (RSS) should be around for another 100 years. It's better if everyone functions as per the Constitution," he said.

Siddaramaiah is 'biggest borrowing CM', says Ashoka

BENGALURU, DHNS: Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka on Wednesday described Chief Minister Siddaramaiah as "Biggest Borrowing CM" and criticised the Congress government for its borrowings.

Juxtaposing Siddaramaiah's record of becoming the longest-serving CM with the government's borrowings, Ashoka said: "The title of 'longest-serving CM' is merely a statistic. The title of 'Biggest Borrowing CM' is a legacy."

Ashoka flagged the government's plan to borrow a staggering Rs 93,000 crore in January-March quarter of this fiscal.

"This cannot be called governance; it is the very definition of panic-driven financial management. This debt surge is driven by a collapsing fiscal structure," he said in a tweeted statement.

The government, Ashoka said, is borrowing to repay previous loans and fund "unsustainable" guarantee schemes.

The government is borrowing "because fundamental economic planning failed, leading to a cash flow collapse."

The government's borrowings "is a clear indicator of fiscal stress," Ashoka argued.

"Chief Minister Siddaramaiah must realise that history does not honour the hollow record of time spent in office. It will judge the track record of legacy left behind," he said.

"And what is being left behind today is undeniable: mountain of debt, clear trail of inefficiency and a mortgaged future."

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
2nd Floor, Palike Soudha, M C Layout, Govindarajanagara, Bengaluru-560040.

No: ACF/BWCC/TENDER/PR/85/2025-26 Date: 07.01.2026

SHORT TIME TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through GOK KPP Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in only)

The Assistant Conservator of Forests, BWCC, Bangalore on behalf of the Commissioner, BWCC invites tender two cover systems from Vendors registered detailed in the table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for given in the table through KPPP portal of the Government of Karnataka (viz **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**).

Time Schedule
Following are the Events of Bid process:

Sl. No.	Name of Tender works	Rs in Lakhs	Tender Reference Number
1.	Providing Circular Shaped Metal Tree Guard. 710 Numbers.	30.00	BWCC/2025-26/ IND0001/CALL-2
2.	Supply of Crane in Malleshwaram Zone, West city Corporation. (Vijayanagara, Basavanagudi, Padmanabha nagara Assembly Constituency)	9.50	BWCC/2025-26/ SE003/Call-2
3.	Supply of Crane in R R Nagara zone, West city Corporation.	9.50	BWCC/2025-26/ IND0001//Call-2

Tender Processing fee and EMD should be made in e-procurement **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** portal only using any of the following four modes of e-payment.

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests, BWCC

Government of Karnataka
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Bagalkot
Tel Phone.: 08354- 235042 E-mail ID: bgkeezpe@yahoo.com Fax: 08354-235043

No: EE/PRED/BGK/PB-1/5054/Tender/2025-26/4891 Date:06.01.2026

SHORT TENDER NOTIFICATION (One &Two Cover System) (KW-1, 2 & 4 Bid Document)

Tender Called for the Work in the above notification through E-mode tendering is read as below.

Item rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement **ACT 1999** and **Rules 2000 STANDARD BID DOCUMENT KW-4** through Public electronic Tendering System (E-Tender from Class-1, 2, 3 contractor (Civil) registered in **KPWD**, Who have got adequate financial resources, State of Technology, Suitable Construction equipments technical man Power & Sufficient past Experience for the following Work as per Schedule Given Below.

Tender Called for **2024-25**ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶಿರ್ಷಿಕೆ:**5054** ರಡಿ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸುರಿದ ಮಳೆ ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರವಾಹದಿಂದಾಗಿ ಹಾನಿಗೊಳಗಾದ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಸೇತುವೆ ಮತ್ತು ಚರಂಡಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಮುಧೋಳ ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಹಂಚಿಕೆಯಾಗಿರುವ **ರೂ.10.00 ಕೋಟಿ** ಮೊತ್ತದ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಬೀಳಗಿ ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಹಂಚಿಕೆಯಾದ **ರೂ.10.00 ಕೋಟಿ** ಮೊತ್ತದ ಯೋಜನೆ **03. 2023–24**ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶಿರ್ಷಿಕೆ:**5054** ರಡಿ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳ ವಿಶೇಷ ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಡಿ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಬೀಳಗಿ ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ರಸ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸೇತುವೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಲು **ರೂ.255.00** ಲಕ್ಷ ಅನುದಾನದ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಮುಧೋಳ, ಹುನಗುಂದ ಹಾಗೂ ಜಮಖಂಡಿ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ

Scheme Under Work Indent No:
ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಕಾ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ: 17346/CALL-2
ಪ್ರವರ್ಗ–2 (ಎ) ವರ್ಗದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯ ಕಾ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 22578, 22582
ಪರಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಜಾತಿ ವರ್ಗದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯ ಕಾ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 21741, 21742, 21233

ಇದ್ದು, ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ವಿವರ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ15.00 ದಿಂದ 150.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ಮಿತಿಗೊಳಪಟ್ಟು), ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅರ್ಜಿಯ ಬೆಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ ಎಲ್ಲ ವಿವರಗಳು ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದಂತೆ. read as below.

Calendar of event

1	Request of blank Tender Documents and receipt of Completed Technical & Financial Bid through e-procurement	Dt:07.01.2026 to 17.01.2026 at 5.30 pm
2	Pre-bid Meeting Date	Dt:14.01.2026 at 11.00 am
3	Opening of Technical Bid Date	Dt:19.01.2026 at 11.00 am
4	Opening of Financial Bid Date	Technical Bid Approved.

Note:-More details can be obtained through website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the below signed Office during the office hours. **Phone no: 08354-235042**

DIPR/Bagalkot/495/Deshpadepublicity/2025-26

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Bagalkote

TUMAKURU CITY CORPORATION, TUMAKURU
website: www.tumkurucity.mrc.gov.in Office Number: 0816-2272200
e-mail: itstaff_ulb_tumkur@yahoo.com Helpline : 9449872599

No:TCC/Engineer Section/ele&ws/Tender/CR/14/2025-26 Date:05-01-2026

Tender Notification

The Commissioner, Tumakuru City Corporation, Tumakuru invites tenders as per the KTPP act 1999-2000 through KPPP portal for Tumakuru City Corporation, for for Water Supply work under genaral fund 2025-26. For more information go to website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ and contact technical section in the office hours.

Contractors can download and submit the tenders through e-Procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/** Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically.

Scheduled calendar of events and other information are as follows:

1	Date of Queries of Tenders	:	**17-01-2026 at 5.00 pm**
2	Last Date for Submission of Tenders	:	**20-01-2026 at 5.00 pm**
3	Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids)	:	**22-01-2026 at 11am**

Postponement of calendar of events (if any) is only through e-Procurement portal and will not be published in newspapers.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Tumakuru City Corporation
Tumakuru

DIPR/TUM/RO-216/25-26/Oysters

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

KPTCL invites Tenders against Bid Enquiry numbers for the following works.

No. CEE/Tr(OP)Z/TKR/SEE(O)/AEE-2/2025-26/10970-72 Dated:05.01.2026
(1) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/Tr(O)Z/TKR/SEE(O)/AEE-2/2025-26/0037 dt: 13.08.2025 for Providing Additional 02 no's. of 11kV PCVCB Feeder Breakers at 66/11kV S/S Mylanahally, Operation Division Hiriyur on PTK Basis. (Breakers will be supplied by KPTCL) / Call-3. **(Reserved for Cat-II(A).**

No. CEE/Tr(OP)Z/TKR/SEE/AEE-2/2025-26/10973-74 Dated:05.01.2026
(2) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/Tr(O)Z/TKR/SEE(O)/AEE-2/2025-26/0043 dt:11.09.2025/Call-3.
Combined Package for:
Work A: Supply & Laying of Copper Control Cable at 400kV side for replacement of faulty control cable from 400kV side ICT-02 HV breakers to control room C&R Panel & Beerenahalli-02 C&R Panel CB BMK Box to relay panel at 400/220kV R/S Guttur.
Work B: Supply & Laying of Copper Control Cable for replacement of faulty protection, metering, CT/PT cables for 400kV, 220kV lines including ICT's, 400kV reactors at 400/220kV R/S Guttur.

No. CEE/Tr(OP)Z/TKR/SEE(O)/AEE-2/2025-26/10975-77 Dated:05.01.2026
(3) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/TKR/SEE(O)/AEE-2/2025-26/0088 dt: 05.01.2026. for Augmentation of 2X20MVA, 66/11 kV Transformer by 2X31.5MVA, 66/11 kV Transformer at 66/11 kV Channagiri sub-station in Benkikere Operation Division at Channagiri Taluk, Davanagere District on Partial Turnkey Percentage Tender Basis.

The detailed information regarding subject enquiry in KPP portal can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **www.kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or **http:/kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after for (Sl.No. 1) 12.01.2026, (Sl.No. 2) 08.01.2026 and (Sl.No.3): 10.01.2026** and other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, (Elec.,) Transmission (Op) Zone, KPTCL,"Prasarana Bhavana", 1st Floor, 66/11kV Tumakuru sub-station Premises, Tumakuru-03

Government of Karnataka
DISTRICT HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE OFFICERS OFFICE KALABURAGI
Tel Number : 08472278619, Mail : dhogulbarga@gmail.com

No. EST-3/CR/188/2024-25 Date : 07-01-2026

:: SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION CALL-4 ::

1) Tender Publication Number and Date : No : **EST/C3/CR/188/2024-25,** 2) Estimated amount received for tender : Approximate **Rs. 2,35,00,000/- (Rupees Two Crore thirty-five lakh only),** 3) EMD amount Rs. : Rs. 3,52,500.00/- (Rupees Three Lakh Fifty Two thousand five hundred rupees only), 4) Starting and closing date and time for submission of tender envelopes through e-portal : Start date : **07-01-2026 to 17-01-2026 Time : 4.00 PM,** 5) Date and time of opening of technical envelopes of e-portal : Date : **19-01-2026 at 4.30 pm,** 6) Date and time of opening of financial envelope : Date : **20-01-2026 at 4.30 pm,** 7) Office address and telephone number to contact for more information : District Health and Family Welfare Officers Office Kalaburagi E-mail : dhogulbarga@gmail.com, Tel No. 08472-278619

DIPR/Kalaburagi/946/KSMC&A/2025-26

Sd/- District Health and Family Welfare Officer Kalaburagi

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY & DRAINAGE BOARD
KALABURAGI ZONE, KALABURAGI
Office of the Chief Engineer KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone, Kalaburagi

No. KWB/CE(K)/TEC/AE-2/Raichur/UGD -SPC/1296/2025-26/ Date : 05-01-2026

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

1) Detail of Work: **"Providing UGD System to ward No.19 of Raichur city under SCP /TSP Grants of Raichur city for the year 2025-26 (Lumpsum) (No Variation)"** (Work Indent No : KUWSDB/2025-26/WT/WORK_INDENT471), 2) Amount of Estimate : **Rs.205.15 Lakhs** (Excluding GST), 3) Eligibility of Contractor : Eligible Contractors, 4) Details of Tender application amount and EMD amount **: Rs.3,08,000/-,** 5) Period of Completion **:** 04 (Four) Months, 6) Date and Time for commencement of downloading of tender documents from the e- procurement portal **07.01.2026 after 17:10** hours, 7) Date & Time of Pre-Bid Meeting**: 12.01.2026 at 11:30 hours**, 8) Last Date and Time for receipt of Tenders **: 21.01.2026 upto 17:30 hours,** 9) Date and Time for Opening of Tender **: 23.01.2026 after 11:00 hours**, 10) Addl. information **: Office of the Chief Engineer KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone,"Jalbhavan", Rajapur, Kusnoor Road, Telephone : 08472-220817 E-mail ID : kwbceklb14@gmail.com** 11) Address of E-portal : www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

DIPR/Kalaburagi/940/
Deshpande Publicity/2025-26

Sd/- Chief Engineer,
KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone, Kalaburagi

KARNATAKA RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Grameenabhivriddhi Bhavana, 4th & 5th Floor, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru - 560 009.

No: KRIDL/WKS/STL/TND/2025-26 Date:07.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The applications are invited for the supply of TMT Steel Bars as per IS 1786 FE 550 to KRIDL (KLAC) sub divisions throughout Karnataka from the Manufacturers / Primary Manufacturers / Agents / Dealers with turnover stipulated in table below, per annum in last 3 financial years. The firm shall have satisfactory completion of similar supplies of 1000 MT in the last three financial years to the Government Departments/ Semi-Government Departments / Public sector undertakings and Public & Private Firms / Companies. apply only through the E-Governance Secretariat's. **New Website:www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Contact:**+91 9240214000, +91 9240214001.

Sl. No.	Particulars of Tender	Qty. in M.T.	Approx. Amount Rs. in Lakhs	EMD Amount Rs. in Lakhs	Required Turnover Per Annum of Firm Rs.in Lakhs
1	Tender Part-I Bengaluru & BBMP Zone	501	267.53	4.01	856.00
2	Tender Part-II Mysuru Zone	619	329.92	4.95	1056.00
3	Tender Part-III Central (Chitraduraga) Zone	780	416.52	6.25	1333.00
4	Tender Part-IV Belagavi Zone	715	383.95	5.76	1229.00
5	Tender Part-V Kalaburagi Zone	385	205.59	3.08	658.00

Period of supply three months from the date of Supply order.
- Last date and time for enquiry is **28.01.2026 up to 14.00 hrs.**
- Last date and time for receipt of tender **28.01.2026 up to 15.00 hrs.**
- Date of Opening of Technical Bid is on **30.01.2026 at 15.00 hrs.**
- Date of Opening of Financial Bid is on **31.01.2026 at 15.00 hrs.**

For further details please contact:
Chief Engineer (North)
KARNATAKA RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMET LTD,Bengaluru-09.
Phone: 080-28015605, Email:-ddworkskridl@gmail.com
For information please log on to: www.kridl.org.in

Sd/- Chief Engineer (North)

Workers and officials gather at the spot of the incident at the Inamdar sugar factory at Marakumbi village in Bailahongal taluk in Belagavi district.

3 workers die after boiling sugarcane juice spills at factory

BAILHONGAL (BELAGAVI DISTRICT), DHNS: In a tragic incident, three workers at a sugar factory died after boiling sugarcane juice spilled over them at Marakumbi village in Bailhongal taluk, Belagavi district on Wednesday. Meanwhile, five other workers sustained grievous injuries in the incident.

The three victims were fixing a leaking compartment valve, which opened suddenly pouring boiling sugarcane juice over the trio, and five other workers.

Akshay Chopade (45), 31-year-old Deepak Munavalli and 25-year-old Sudarshan Banoshi lost their lives in the mishap.

The valve out of which the sugarcane juice was leaking is at a height of 40 feet from the ground. While tightening it, the valve suddenly opened and sugarcane juice spilled over the workers, who writhed in agony. Onlookers said that the workers on whom the juice spilled screamed in agony. Although the workers sent for an ambulance without delay, two workers had died by the time the ambulance arrived at the factory.

Of the six workers who were rushed to the hospital, one succumbed to his injuries.

Murgod Police Inspector T M Matapathi visited the factory where the incident occurred, and collected relevant information about the mishap.

Census to begin on April 1 after 6-year delay

Houselisting operations between April and Sept 30

NEW DELHI, DHNS

After a delay of six years, Census 2027 will kick-start on April 1 this year with the houselisting operations spread over six months.

The houselisting operations (HLO) — the first phase — will take place between April 1 and September 30 over a period of 30 days in each state and Union Territory (UT).

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) published a notification in this regard, which also said there would be an option for self-enumeration over 15 days just before the start of the houselisting operations.

The Census was scheduled to take place in 2021, but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Census is usually conducted in two phases — houselisting and housing census from April to September 2026, and population enumeration in February 2027.

The pre-test of the first phase of the 2027 Census was conducted from November 10 to 30 last year in all states and UTs.

In the first phase of the Census, which is the HLO, details related to the housing conditions, assets, and amenities of each household will be collected.

In the second phase, when the population is counted, demographic, socio-economic, cultural and other details of every person in each household will be collected.

The population count will be carried out with a reference date of October 1, 2026, in Ladakh and snow-bound non-synchronous areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

THE DETAILS

- 2021 Census was postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic
- Census is usually conducted in two phases
- This time, houselisting census will happen from April to Sept
- Population enumeration will be in Feb 2027
- Pre-test of first phase of 2027 Census was conducted from Nov 10 to 30 last year

The reference date for the Census shall be 0000 hours of March 1, 2027, except for the UT of Ladakh and snow-bound non-synchronous areas of the UT of J&K and the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

The last time India conducted a Census was in 2011, but caste was not counted as part of the exercise, which is carried out under Census Act, 1948, and Census Rules, 1990.

The exercise, which will be the first-ever digital census in the country, giving the citizens an opportunity to self-enumerate, will cost the government at least Rs 13,000 crore.

In Parliament last month, the MHA said the Registrar General and Census Commissioner were in the process of finalising the questionnaire for Census 2027 based on inputs and suggestions from various stakeholders, including ministries and Census data users.

It also said Census 2027 would collect migration related data, including the duration of stay at the current residence and the reason for migration.

Assets of thrice-elected MPs up 110% since 2014: Report

Average wealth of 102 MPs rises from Rs 15.76 cr to Rs 33.23 cr in 10 yrs

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The 102 MPs who were elected in the last three consecutive Lok Sabha elections have recorded a 110% rise in their average assets between 2014 and 2024, with an analysis showing that BJP lawmaker Mukesh Rajput witnessed a 12,821% rise, the highest.

His assets rose from Rs 7.25 lakh to Rs 9.29 crore over a 10-year period.

Union minister CR Patil is the only MP who won thrice, saw his assets decreasing – from Rs 74.47 crore to Rs 39.39 crore, a 47% slide.

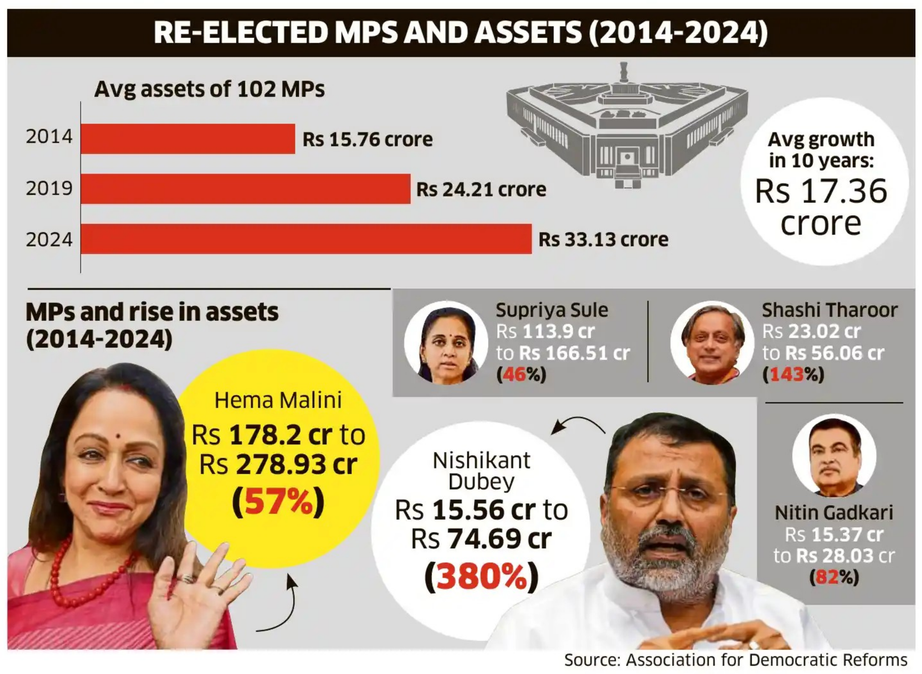
Prime Minister Narendra Modi saw his assets grow by 82%, from Rs 1.65 crore to Rs 3.02 crore during the period while Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi witnessed a 117% jump in his assets from Rs 9.40 crore to Rs 20.39 crore, according to Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

Modi was one of the 65 BJP lawmakers, whose average growth in assets was 108%, while Rahul was only one of the eight Congress MPs, whose average growth clocked 135%, the report said.

Based on affidavits

Currently, there are 103 MPs who were elected since 2014, but the ADR analysis was based on affidavits filed by 102 lawmakers.

The 2019 Lok Sabha affidavit data of Devendra Singh alias Bhole Singh, BJP lawmaker from Akbarpur, was unavailable and excluded from the analysis.


RE-ELECTED MPS AND ASSETS (2014-2024)
Avg assets of 102 MPs
2014
Rs 15.76 crore
2019
Rs 24.21 crore
2024
Rs 33.13 crore
Avg growth in 10 years: Rs 17.36 crore
MPs and rise in assets (2014-2024)
Hema Malini
Rs 178.2 cr to Rs 278.93 cr (57%)
Supriya Sule
Rs 113.9 cr to Rs 166.51 cr (46%)
Shashi Tharoor
Rs 23.02 cr to Rs 56.06 cr (143%)
Nishikant Dubey
Rs 15.56 cr to Rs 74.69 cr (380%)
Nitin Gadkari
Rs 15.37 cr to Rs 28.03 cr (82%)
Source: Association for Democratic Reforms

The report showed that Rajput's assets rose from Rs 7.25 lakh in 2014 to Rs 9.36 crore in 2019, but had declined to Rs 9.29 crore in 2024.

The average assets of the 102 MPs were Rs 15.76 crore, Rs 24.21 crore and Rs 33.13 crore in 2014, 2019 and 2024, respectively. The average asset growth for these 102 re- elected MPs, between the Lok Sabha Elections of 2014 to 2024, is Rs 17.36 crore or 110% in 10 years.

8,021% Increase

If one takes the proportion of growth, BJP's Dharambir Singh follows Rajput as he saw a rise of 8,021% in his assets from Rs 14.24 lakh to Rs 11.42 crore.

BJP's Chava Vindo Lakhamshi (1,163% — Rs 56.18 lakh) and Saumitra Khan (2,477% — Rs 11.97 lakh to Rs 2.96 crore) were other MPs whose assets rose drastically.

The lawmakers with the lowest rise in assets were Congress' Kodikkunnil Suresh, who saw a modest rise of Rs 20.60 lakh or 16% and Trinamool Congress' Prasun Banerjee, who saw his assets rise by a meagre Rs 3.19 lakh.

Cong appoints Baghel, DKS as observers for Assam polls

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Days after announcing screening committees to shortlist candidates, Congress on Wednesday announced senior observers to oversee election campaign in poll-bound states, assigning former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar to Assam and Mukul Wasnik to Tamil Nadu.

Senior Karnataka Minister KJ George and former Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot are assigned to Kerala where youth leaders Imran Pratapgarhi and Kanhaiya Kumar are also appointed as senior observers.

The appointment of Baghel and Shivakumar comes close on the heels of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra being made the chairperson of Assam Screening Committee and it is seen as Congress leadership's emphasis on Assam where it hopes to stop the 10-year BJP rule.

Apart from Wasnik, Congress has also named senior Telangana Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and senior leader Qazi Mohammad Nizamuddin as senior observers in Tamil Nadu.

Fadnavis blasts leaders for alliance with Cong, AIMIM

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

At a time when the BJP is aggressively pursuing its 'Congress-free India agenda' and putting forward the narrative of 'batange toh katange', the party was left stunned when its local units forged alliances with Congress and AIMIM in Maharashtra.

The BJP local unit teamed up with Congress and Ajit Pawar-led NCP to sideline Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and take control of the Ambernath Municipal Council (AMC) in Thane district.

The party also tied up with AIMIM in Akot in Akola district to secure a majority in Akot Municipal Council.

As the BJP came under sharp criticism for 'unholy alliances', Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said he was unaware of the developments. "We have made it clear that alliance with Congress and AIMIM is not acceptable...if it has happened, it has to break... directives have been accordingly issued," said Fadnavis.

Meanwhile, state Congress president Harshavardhan Sapkal came down heavily against the local unit in Ambernath, while AIMIM state unit president Imtiaz Jaleel too assured action.

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS
Chief Minister
"I am making it very clear that any alliance with the Congress or AIMIM will not be accepted. If any local leader has taken such a decision on their own, it is wrong in terms of discipline.

SHRIKANT SHINDE
Shiv Sena MP
"It is inappropriate to join hands with political parties against whom we contest elections. If some people are doing it only to grab power, then seniors should look into it.

SANJAY RAUT
Shiv Sena (UBT) MP
"What happened in Akot and Ambernath shows frivolous behaviour of the BJP. The party can forge an alliance with anyone to grab power.

Slamming the BJP, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said, "The BJP has double standards... They have formed an alliance with AIMIM in Mira Bhayandar and with Congress in Ambernath...people should not have faith in them."

In Ambernath, the political tussle is directly between the BJP and the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena. In the 59-ward AMC, the Shiv Sena had won the lion's share of 23 seats, followed by BJP with 16, Congress 12 and NCP (Ajit Pawar) four.

BJP's Tejashree Karanjule was elected as the president through a direct election.

By joining hands, the BJP (16), Congress (12), and NCP (four) have reached a total of 32 seats against Shiv Sena's 23.

What happened in Akot was far more surprising. BJP's Maya Dhule won the post of president through direct election, defeating AIMIM's Firozabi Sikandar Rana.

However, the BJP failed to secure a clear majority in the 35-member council. Elections have so far been held for 33 seats, of which the BJP managed to win only 11 seats, leaving it short of majority mark.

Hence, BJP floated the Akot Vikas Manch and included AIMIM (5), Prahar Janshakti Party (3) Shiv Sena (UBT) (2), NCP 2, NCP (SP) 1 and Shiv Sena (1).

"Our political stance is against the BJP. I have asked the in charge in Akot to brief me," said AIMIM state unit chief Imtiaz Jaleel.

Cash-haul case: SC flags 'infirmity' in Speaker's probe panel on Justice Varma

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it seemed there was some infirmity in the Lok Sabha Speaker's constitution of the inquiry committee to probe allegations against Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma in a cash-haul case, and that it would examine whether it was grave enough to warrant a termination of the proceedings.

Justice Yashwant Varma

Considering a writ petition, a bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma said the court did not agree with the submissions of senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Justice Varma, that the Rajya Sabha deputy chairperson was not competent to reject a motion following Chairperson Jagdeep Dhankhar's resignation.

The court on December 16 issued a notice on Justice Varma's plea challenging the Lok Sabha Speaker's constitution of a committee to probe corruption charges against him.

Rohatgi submitted that if motions were moved simultaneously in both Houses of Parliament, a committee could be formed only jointly by the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Rajya Sabha chairperson.

He pointed out the deputy chairman rejected the Rajya Sabha motion on August 11, and the Lok Sabha Speaker formed the committee on August 12.

However, both motions were moved on the same day, July 11, said the counsel. He contended after one House rejected the motion, the Lok Sabha Speaker could not have constituted the committee.

"If one house has rejected a motion, then where is the bar on the Lok Sabha in constituting the committee?" asked the bench.

Rohatgi submitted that since both motions were moved on the same day, both required to be admitted, and only then, the committee can be formed, that too jointly by the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

It fixed the matter for consideration on Thursday.

The inquiry committee comprises Supreme Court judge Justice Aravind Kumar, Madras High Court Chief Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava, and senior advocate from Karnataka, B V Acharya.

JD(S) Kerala unit merges with new socialist party

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: The Kerala unit of the Janata Dal (Secular) has merged with the newly formed Indian Socialist Janata Dal, a move triggered by the party's national leadership decision to ally with the BJP.

The party's two MLAs in Kerala, including Power Minister K Krishnankutty, have formally informed the Speaker of the Kerala Assembly about the merger.

The decision comes in protest against the JD(S) national leadership's alliance with the BJP.

The Kerala unit is part of the ruling Left Democratic Front. A formal meeting to complete the merger will be held in Kochi on January 17.

JD(S) state president Mathew T Thomas, the second MLA from the party in Kerala, said there would be no question of disqualification as both elected members are joining the new party together.

Turkman Gate falls silent after demolition drive

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

A day after at least five police personnel were injured when an anti-encroachment drive near the Faiz-e-Elahi mosque in Delhi's Ramlila Maidan area turned violent, the locality, including the historic Turkman Gate, remained tense and under heavy security.

Clashes erupted late Tuesday night after the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) launched a demolition drive to remove encroachments, following an order of the Delhi High Court. The operation began around 1 am.

On December 22, the MCD issued a notice stating that any structures exceeding 0.195 acres in the encroached land will be demolished.

Consequently, the managing committee of Masjid Syed Elahi filed a petition, challenging the MCD order. On January 6, the Delhi HC upheld the MCD decision.

As soon as the drive started, around 35-40 individuals started pelting stones. As a result, five policemen, including an SHO, were injured. An FIR was filed, and five people have been detained.

Debris being removed from the site after an anti-encroachment drive near the Faiz-e-Elahi mosque in Ramlila Maidan area, in New Delhi. DH PHOTO

Joint Commissioner of Police (Central Range) Madhur Verma said the police have filed cases under several sections of the BNS.

'Collecting evidence'

"We are gathering more evidence with the help of the body-borne cameras worn by the police and videography from the spot," Verma said.

Sarim, a college student, said residents heard a huge commotion in the middle of the night. "I could see from my room that a crowd had gathered and earthmovers were brought in. It was a complete lockdown once the issue was resolved," he said.

Faiz, a juice-shop owner, said he was unable to even step out to fetch milk for his children.

Another resident, Fatima, said she will stay at her mother's place in Jamia Nagar with her children for a few days. "I requested the police and they let me go. My husband is staying back," she said.

The demolition continued till late Wednesday, with the MCD clearing encroachments around the mosque.

The encroachments on the Ramlila Maidan include a Markaz complex, a barat ghar (banquet hall), a dialysis centre and a diagnostic centre. A survey by the MCD in October last year revealed that over 36,000 sq ft of the maidan was encroached upon.

DELHI ACTION

- 36 earthmovers deployed to carry out a demolition drive on encroached land near the Faiz-e-Elahi mosque in Delhi's Ramlila Maidan area
- Around 36,000 square feet of encroached area cleared
- A diagnostic centre, a banquet hall and two boundary walls were demolished

PMK leader Anbumani Ramadoss greets AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami in Chennai on Wednesday.

Boost for AIADMK as PMK rejoins alliance ahead of polls

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Tamil Nadu's principal opposition party, AIADMK, on Wednesday received a boost with the return of the PMK into the party-led alliance for the 2026 Assembly polls.

The deal was clinched between AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami and Paatali Makkal Katchi (PMK) president Anbumani Ramadoss, who is involved in a public spat with his father and party founder S Ramadoss for control of the outfit that holds considerable influence among Vanniyars, a dominant community.

PMK is the first major party to join the NDA ever since the AIADMK and BJP revived their ties in April 2025, with Palaniswami announcing that a few more parties will join their alliance in the coming weeks.

Though hit by an internal strife, with the party's election symbol, Mango, being sought by both factions, the AIADMK is confident that the induction of the Anbumani faction will strengthen the NDA since it enjoys a majority in various party forums. However, Ramadoss is yet to react to the development, triggering speculation that the senior leader has been convinced to stay quiet.

"The AIADMK–PMK partnership represents an alliance that truly understands and reflects the sentiments and aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu. This alliance will work relentlessly to remove the anti-people DMK government," Palaniswami said.

EPS to meet BJP top brass

After formalising the alliance, Palaniswami left for New Delhi to hold discussions with the top BJP leadership, including Home Minister Amit Shah.

It is believed that the AIADMK and BJP want to formalise the alliance in the next few weeks and organise a grand public rally with all allies sharing the stage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi by January-end or early February.

AIADMK sources told *DH* that the PMK is likely to be allotted 20 to 25 Assembly seats and probably a Rajya Sabha seat, though the final numbers will be decided in due course. "The discussions began with the PMK seeking more than 30 seats. We offered him about 20 seats, and the discussions ended on a positive note. That's why the alliance was made public," a source said.

Stalin flays Shah over Hindus' rights remark

CHENNAI, DHNS: Terming Home Minister Amit Shah's charge that the rights of Hindus are being snatched away in Tamil Nadu as "completely false" and "unbecoming of his position", Chief Minister M K Stalin on Wednesday said the truth is that the intention of a few people to create riots and divisions within the society has not succeeded in the state.

MK Stalin

Stalin also said the 2026 elections will decide whether Tamil Nadu should be governed by those from the state (DMK) or people from Delhi (AIADMK-BJP alliance) "who have no connection with us" and claimed that voting for the AIADMK alliance means the BJP will rule the state.

Addressing a government function in Dindigul, Stalin tore into Shah for his statement and went on to say that the DMK, after coming to power in 2021, conducted consecration ceremonies for about 4,000 ancient temples, and reclaimed 7,655 acres of land worth Rs 7,701 crore belonging to 997 temples.

"Our government respects the faith of everyone and protects their religious rights. It is undignified for the Home Minister to say that Hindus' rights are being snatched away in Tamil Nadu. To be honest, the intentions of those who want to incite riots and create divisions have not succeeded in Tamil Nadu," he added.

CULTURAL LINK

Vedic School to come up in Mauritius under TTD's guidance

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Mauritius President Dharambeer Gokhool said that a Vedic school will be established at the under-construction Harihara Temple in Mauritius, with guidance and support from the TTD.

Dharambeer, along with his wife, was in Tirumala on Wednesday. He offered prayers in the hill shrine of Sri Venkateswara Swamy in Tirumala.

Upon his arrival at the temple, he was received by the Minister of AP Endowments Anam Ramnarayan Reddy, along with TTD Chairman BR Naidu and TTD EO Anil Kumar Singhal.

Addressing the gathering at Sri Venkateswara Veda Vignana Peetham, President Gokhool said he was a teacher and went on to become the president. He emphasised that teachers enjoy immense respect and play a vital role in the development of modern society.

He also said Mauritius is making dedicated efforts to develop the nation by drawing inspiration from the state of Andhra Pradesh, which is progressing through a blend of culture, tradition, and modern technology. He recalled that during his visit to attend the World Telugu Conference, he had darshan of Sri Venkateswara Swamy along with his family.

He further noted that Indians are at the forefront when it comes to honouring and welcoming guests.

Later, the Vedic scholars offered blessings to the President and he was presented with a portrait of Sri Venkateswara Swamy on the occasion.

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

Extend stability with preparedness

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s financial stability report paints a healthy picture of the country's banking sector with stronger balance sheets and better asset quality. The gross non-performing assets (NPAs) as a share of total advances stood at 2.1% of all advances in September 2025, as against 11.2% in 2017-18. Net NPAs declined from about 3% to 0.5% during this period. The last decade saw major detoxification of banking assets, after the RBI enforced an asset quality review on the banks. While an earnest drive for recovery of bad loans helped, a big part of the loans had to be written off, necessitating capital infusion into banks from the public exchequer. The apex bank expects strong capital and liquidity buffers, improved asset quality, and higher profitability to prepare banks for future adversities.

While underlining stability in the sector, the report takes note of increasing competition from non-banking sources in credit delivery. Loan growth has outpaced deposit growth, pushing up the credit-deposit ratio. NPAs are seen to be higher in the priority sectors than in other areas. While such lending should continue, there is a need for more scrutiny and greater efforts to ensure that loans do not go bad. The report has also expressed concern over some issues related to retail lending. More than half of all retail loan slippages are tied to unsecured products such as personal loans and credit cards. This calls for greater vigil, as such loans are increasing. They accounted for nearly 76% of slippages for private banks, compared with 15.9% for public sector banks. Deposit mobilisation may face challenges, as it is seen that nearly half the financial flows to the commercial sector are coming from non-banking sources. As the capital market offers better returns and there is a trend of savings moving in that direction, banks need to offer matching returns to attract deposits.

RBI highlights strong banking trends, but domestic and global risks demand continued vigil

The report has noted areas where the banks have performed strongly, but has also indicated vulnerabilities that call for policy resolve and preparedness. Since the sector is critical to the economy, any shocks – triggered by internal or external factors – will leave a significant impact. While the country's economy is stable, it cannot be seen as isolated from the turbulence in the global economy, caused by geopolitical tensions and other reasons. There are no guarantees of immunity from such shocks. But it is prudent, and possible, to adopt the best internal safeguards. The report shows that the regulator is aware of the risks and the need to prepare for them.

Rangayana in a crisis of identity

For over three decades, Rangayana has been the moral and artistic backbone of Kannada theatre. Conceived in 1989 by the visionary B V Karanth as a 'theatre village', the Mysuru-based repertory transformed theatre from an occasional amateur pursuit into a full-time, rigorous profession. It trained generations of actors, technicians and directors, expanded the Kannada dramatic canon, and carried theatre beyond elite halls into public consciousness through landmark productions and festivals, such as Bahuroopi. Few institutions have contributed as decisively to modernising Kannada theatre while remaining rooted in its folk and social traditions. That legacy is now under strain. Across Rangayana's satellite centres in Kalaburagi, Dharwad, Shivamogga, Davanagere, and Karkala, there is a visible thinning of talent. Applications for artistes have sharply declined: Kalaburagi received just 17 eligible applications this year, down from 47 in 2019-20; Dharwad, once a vibrant cultural hub, has seen a similar fall. Youngsters trained in theatre increasingly migrate to television serials, films, and digital platforms, where remuneration and job security are far higher. With actors paid around Rs 18,000 and technicians Rs 25,000 on short-term contracts, retention of talent has become nearly impossible.

Talent crunch, poor funding, and institutional neglect hit the iconic repertory theatre

This crisis must be seen in the wider history of Karnataka's theatre movement. From folk traditions such as Yakshagana and Bayalata, to the professional company theatre pioneered by the Gubbi Company, and later, the modern amateur movement led by figures like K V Subbanna, B V Karanth, Girish Karnad, and Prasanna, theatre has always reinvented itself. Institutions such as Ninasam at Heggodu and Ranga Shankara in Bengaluru sustained this spirit of experimentation and social engagement, with women – from R Nagarathnamma and Chindodi Leela to Arundhati Nag – playing transformative roles.

Rangayana's troubles go beyond economics. Political interference in appointments has dented its credibility. The appointment of Satish Tipaturu, a Ninasam alumnus, in late 2024 has been welcomed as a return to theatre roots. Compounding Rangayana's woes are the lack of cultural engagement in schools and colleges, shrinking budgets, and a failure to treat the repertory as a research and training hub rather than merely a production unit. Reviving Rangayana requires political vision and artistic humility. Directors must be chosen for theatre competence, not ideology. Artists should be offered longer tenures, better pay, and creative freedom. Above all, Rangayana must reclaim its founding vision: as a space for research, dissent, experimentation, and dialogue. If Karnataka's theatre has long been its conscience, Rangayana must once again become its heartbeat.

METHOD TO MOTIVE

Donroe Doctrine and a Panama throwback

The US's strategic interests are real, but the Venezuela strike also echoes a 'law and order' action from the past

VAPPALA BALACHANDRAN

Various theories have been advanced to explain the reasons for Donald Trump's order to abduct Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and attack the resource-rich Latin American nation. Is it a thinly disguised attempt to grab and control oil and other natural resources? Or a return to the doctrine-directed interventionism of the past (Monroe Doctrine of 1823) by the United States in the Western Hemisphere, and its justification? The first theory centres around oil: to grab and control Venezuela's vast oil deposits by allowing the entry of US multinational oil companies after Maduro's exit.

Apart from oil is the deeper rationale of metals like silver. The Arco Minero del Orinoco, a vast mineral-rich region in Venezuela, is estimated to contain over $1 trillion in untapped natural resources. This region is said to have huge reserves of silver, gold and rare metals which are important for American military systems, defence supply chains, and advanced electronics. Also, in light of a growing shortage of precious metals, these strategic metals are becoming as important as oil was. Control of these resources could secure years of strategic metal supply and give the US a geopolitical edge.

The second reason is the traditionally trotted American desire to "restore democracy". This time, in Venezuela, where the "rigged" 2024 elections saw the opposition's Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia, who was leading in pre-election opinion polls, ended up with only 44.2% of votes against Maduro's 51.2%.

This was akin to what President George HW Bush had told Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachev during the Malta Summit on December 2-3, 1989. Bush spoke of the problems caused by Manuel Noriega, a former CIA asset, in Panama, and that the US was preparing "solid indictments" against him and was going to bring "democracy" to Panama.

The third reason, as reported by the Spanish daily *El País* on December 8, relates to the US President's new security doctrine wherein Latin America is seen as a source of some of the US's serious problems, such as migration, drug export, transnational crime, and the burgeoning Chinese investment in the region.

Trump's twin strategy would include rewarding right-wing regimes in El Salvador, Argentina, Ecuador, and Bolivia, expressing support for the right-wing candidate Nasry Asfura in the elections in Honduras, and pardoning former Honduran president Juan Orlando Hernandez, who was serving a 45-year prison sentence in the US for drug trafficking. Also, such countries would be awarded US companies' contracts without the need for public tenders. Friendly countries would be encouraged by Washington to "make every effort to push out foreign companies that build infrastructure in the region". This is a reference to China. At the same time, recalcitrant states like Venezuela, Colombia, and Chile would be "softened" by "targeted deployments" of military force.

Time magazine said: "The news diverted attention from America's affordability crisis, the loss of health care coverage for millions, and the Epstein files. Instead, all eyes turned to Venezuela". Some observers cite this diversion as the fourth reason. This comes amid reports that the US debt is expected to hit 100% of gross domestic product (GDP) by the end of fiscal year 2025.

Some of these grounds appear unrealistic. First, most of the US economic and technical publications say that the American oil industry has "no interest" in "making the needed investment to revive the antiquated drilling and refining operations of Venezuela" to extract the less desirable "heavy oil, a thick, viscous product, which is far harder to extract and move compared to the domestic US sources".

They quote Reuters and the International Energy Agency (IEA), which indicate a supply glut in 2026. *El País* quotes former Chilean minister and ambassador Jorge Heine, who alleges that Trump wants countries in South America to be like "vassal" states. According to him, Trump does not understand the reluctance of American companies to operate major projects in South America as they find them unprofitable. "The United States is too late; there's no turning back from China's presence in Latin America." Heine also said, early in December, that South American states would not be cowed down by the threat of force through the modern "Donroe Doctrine", which flips the Monroe Doctrine to the present with US plans to reshape the Americas.

A reason why US forces have not yet occupied and taken over Venezuela is the bitter experience in Iraq, despite Trump's declaration that the US would "run the country".

The Noriega abduction

Thus, as things stand, the abduction of Maduro is a US law and order action based on a 1989 legal opinion by then-Assistant Attorney General Bill Barr, issued six months before the invasion of Panama and the abduction of Noriega, the *de facto* dictator of Panama, on December 20, 1989. That opinion, which is likely to be quoted again, was that the UN Charter's prohibition on the use of force in international relations did not bar American agencies from carrying out "forcible abductions" abroad to enforce domestic laws.

Interestingly, the conversation on Noriega during the Malta Summit, held aboard the Soviet cruise ship Maxim Gorky, came days before Bush decided to invade Panama – on December 20, 1989 – and capture Noriega, based on indictments by the Grand Juries in Tampa and Miami, for money laundering and drug smuggling. To this, Gorbachev reacted: "People ask, is there no barrier to US action in independent countries? The United States passes judgment and executes the judgment."

This was recorded by President Bush himself in a book, *A World Transformed* (1998), jointly written by him and his national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft. It was during this summit that the two leaders, Bush and Gorbachev, declared the end of the Cold War.

(The writer is a former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat; Syndicate: The Billion Press)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

The grace in denial

A stray cat taught me that withholding comfort is an act of love

SRIPRIYA SATISH

'Sometimes it takes a heartbreak to shake us awake and help us see we are worth so much more than we're settling for.' – Mandy Hale

This quote reminds me of a stray cat that once had its eyes firmly set on our morning milk packets. Each day became a race between us and the cat—if we were even slightly sluggish, the packets would be ripped open, milk strewn all over the floor, and the cat would feast with great satisfaction. What followed was an hour-long cleaning ordeal, which made mornings stressful and chaotic.

Friends and neighbours offered suggestions on how to outsmart the cat. One idea was to stuff onion and garlic peels inside the bag, but the cat simply ignored them and continued its feast. Next, we tried hanging the bag higher on the door, but somehow the cat managed to scratch them open, licking the dripping milk to its heart's content.

My daughter suggested we simply feed the cat, but the rules of our housing society forbade feeding strays. So the struggle continued. Finally, we asked the milkman to ring the doorbell upon delivery. That small act worked—we managed to grab the packets before the cat could get to them. Our mornings were saved, though much to the cat's visible frustration.

But victory didn't feel sweet for long. Every morning thereafter, the cat sat outside our door, letting out heart-wrenching meows that tugged at our conscience. It waited there until noon, pouring its sorrow into the silence. We later learnt from neighbours that the cat had once been someone's pet in our apartment complex. With its family gone, it had been left to fend for itself. What we saw as mischief was, in truth, its desperate attempt to survive.

Two weeks later, the meowing stopped. One evening, while strolling around the complex, I spotted the same cat—no longer begging, but hunting a rat with fierce determination. In that moment, I realised something profound. Our denial, though painful to watch, had forced the cat to find its strength. It had moved beyond its grief, shedding dependence and learning to stand on its own.

The experience left me with a deeper understanding: sometimes, denial is not cruelty but a quiet act of love. It withholds comfort just long enough for resilience to grow. The cat's journey from helplessness to self-reliance mirrored what Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the Swiss-American psychiatrist, once wrote: denial helps us to pace our feelings of grief. There is a grace in denial. It is nature's way of letting in only as much as we can handle.

Life often places us in situations where immediate relief is withheld—whether through heartbreak, loss, or disappointment. In those moments, we may feel abandoned, just as the cat must have felt. Yet, when we endure, we often emerge stronger, wiser, and better equipped to face life's uncertainties. Sometimes, what seems like denial is, in fact, life's way of nudging us towards growth.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Elastic interpretation of 'terrorism' is troubling

Apropos your editorial 'Expanding terror law sets a troubling precedent' (Jan 7), the Supreme Court's no-bail ruling raises unsettling questions about balancing national security and constitutional liberty. By normalising prolonged incarceration under UAPA, the judgment risks converting "process as punishment" into a routine feature of criminal justice, undermining the presumption of innocence and timely judicial scrutiny. The elastic interpretation of "terrorism" is more troubling, expanding Section 15 to cover non-violent acts like protests or economic disruption, diluting the moral and legal gravity of terror offences. Such overbreadth invites misuse, chills dissent, and hands the executive excessive latitude to criminalise democratic expression. Security concerns are real, but they cannot be addressed by weakening foundational safeguards. A democracy is judged not by how harshly it treats the accused, but by how faithfully it protects rights under pressure. This precedent calls for urgent judicial introspection and legislative correction.
K Chidanand Kumar, Bengaluru

SC is right

It is disappointing to read the editorial, 'Expanding terror law sets a troubling precedent' (Jan 7). The Supreme Court is right in denying bail considering the seriousness of the accusation involved. The call given by the accused to isolate the North East by organising a 'chakka jam' is not to be taken lightly. The SC is again right to term 'terror' the act of taking the country to ransom by blocking roads and other infrastructure affecting the economy. It is not right to endanger national security in the guise of freedom of speech.
H S Gopala Krishna Murthy, Bengaluru

Win for religious freedom

The Madras High Court's decision to uphold the lighting of the lamp at the Deepathoon atop Thiruparankundram hill is a significant victory for religious freedom. By dismissing the state's vague concerns of a law-and-order crisis as an "imaginary ghost," the court has rightly prioritised long-standing traditions over speculative administrative fears. It is essential that the government now focuses on coordinating a peaceful ceremony with the temple management and the ASI rather than further obstructing judicial mandates.
Likitha G M, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

(Prime Minister Narendra) Modi came and said 'Sir, may I see you please'. I have a very good relationship with him...

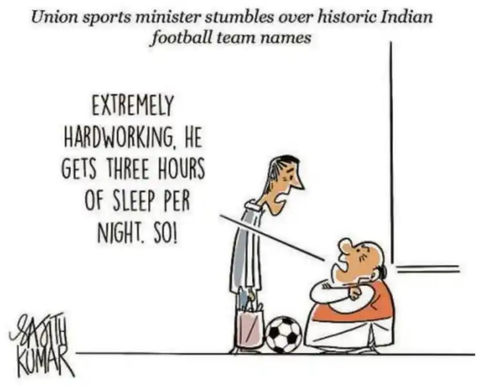
Donald Trump, US President

We are more often betrayed by friends than by enemies.

Marcus Tullius Cicero

TO BE PRECISE

Union sports minister stumbles over historic Indian football team names



IN PERSPECTIVE

PESA rules: Autonomy in check

The self-governance promise in Jharkhand's Scheduled areas is lost under bureaucratic watch

SUJIT KUMAR AND NEIL TANNEN

The notification of the Panchayat [Extension to Scheduled Areas] (PESA) rules has paved the way for a new regime of local self-governance in Jharkhand, in at least 15 out of 24 districts of the state. Some of the Adivasi organisations are set to legally challenge the rules, citing their deviation from the PESA Act, 1996.

It is to be noted that the process of framing the rules was initiated on instructions from the state High Court, acting on an appeal by Adivasi organisations. As a result, the government released the draft rules for public scrutiny in August 2025, and invited suggestions from civil society. The rules are, therefore, framed through a process of unusual transparency and participation. However, the outcome does not quite address some of the major concerns around land and resources. Instead, the rules entangle gram sabhas in a loop of ambiguities, with the ultimate power still resting with the bureaucracy.

The politics around the rules have implications for both democracy and governance in the Scheduled areas of the state. The two key areas in which the Adivasi activists want the absolute powers to be vested in the gram sabhas are matters related to land acquisition and the formation of district councils with autonomy in operations.

While the former seems to be beyond the mandate of the Act, there are provisions for the latter. Land acquisition for mineral extraction, leading to the displacement of people, has been opposed by Adivasis for a long time. This resistance has been aligned with movements that are mobilised around identity. The *Samata* judgment of 1997 gave a legal reference to the activists who have, occasionally, been able to use provisions under laws such as the Forest Rights Act, 2006 to strengthen the movement against resource extraction.

The activists emphasise powers entrusted with the gram sabhas – and formalised through the new rules – in all matters relevant to acquisition of land. For the people's resistance, it is the identity question that shapes priorities. The Pathalgadi movement in the state provides important context to the latter approach – there, the core argument was that autonomous local governance in Adivasi areas is anchored in customary practices. However, the historicity of custom-based institutions in Scheduled areas of the state is also tied to laws that have redefined the idea of local self-governance.

The second major point of contention is a call for elections to the urban local bodies in Scheduled areas, in accordance with the Jharkhand Municipal Act, 2011. The activists who oppose these elections rightly argue for constituting district councils and ensuring a proper representation of the custom-based and other local bodies in the respective districts. The expanding urbanisation of districts such as Ranchi and East Singhbhum is engulfing the rural areas and bringing more non-Adivasis within the urban scope, significantly altering the demography of these regions. This has serious consequences on the decision-making powers of the local people and exposes them further to illegal land alienation.

The PESA rules grant representation to women in the gram sabhas, as against the practices in the custom-driven bodies. They also empower the gram sabhas to lease out minor minerals. However, in most cases, the ultimate power of arbitration to resolve disputes between the stakeholders is still vested in the District Collector. This takes away from the gram sabhas the status of a legislative body, as envisioned under the PESA Act.

The role of TACs

A balance of power between the state government and the local bodies should have been integral to the development narrative in the state. This question of autonomy appears diluted now. What could be the path to resolution? Is there a possible mechanism through which this balance could be achieved?

Under the provisions of Schedule 5 of the Constitution, Tribes Advisory Councils (TACs) are established in states with Scheduled areas. The TACs, which are considered representative bodies of tribal populations, can advise the Governors of states on important issues concerning tribespeople, whenever referred to them. One way to resolve the differences between the local bodies and other stakeholders was to refer such matters to the TACs, rather than leaving them to the discretion of the district administration.

Unfortunately, the PESA rules miss out on the opportunity to adopt this solution, despite widening the consultative role of the gram sabhas. They fall short of restoring local democracy, and bring in bureaucratic control through the back door.

(Sujit is an assistant professor at the School of Development, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru; Neil is the Head of the Department of Political Science, St Joseph's University, Bengaluru)

Kashmir's quiet crisis: Why people are no longer speaking to journalists

DATELINE Srinagar

ZULFIKAR MAJID

Over the past few years, journalists working in the Valley have noticed a quiet but profound shift: people increasingly refuse to speak—not just on record, not just anonymously, but even off the record. Conversations stop midway, voices drop instinctively, and questions are met with polite deflection. "Please don't quote me" has quietly evolved into "Please don't ask."

This is not dramatic censorship through shuttered newspapers or banned websites. It is a subtler, more insidious form of silencing that comes from multiple directions—State institutions, social pressures, and lingering fear of militant groups. The result is a collapse of the line between public speech and private conversation, making even off-the-record exchanges feel risky.

For decades, Kashmiris spoke to journalists despite extraordinary danger. During the peaks of insurgency, when violence and crackdowns were frequent, people still shared their grief, anger and experience. They understood the risks but believed context mattered—that journalists could preserve nuance and act as intermediaries between lived reality and the outside world. That confidence has faded.

Today, ordinary people fear misquotation and inference. In a fragmented media ecosystem, a sentence can travel far from its setting—flattened into a headline, amplified on social media, or repackaged for debates. A cautious observation can appear categorical; an analytical remark can seem provocative. In a region where identity and intent are constantly scrutinised, even unintended interpretations can be risky.

Fear of losing context compounds this. Kashmir resists binaries. A shopkeeper may resent economic disruptions yet reject violence; a student may criticise governance without supporting separatism; a family may desire stability while carrying unresolved political grief. But public discourse outside Kashmir often demands clarity where none exists, forcing words into rigid frames: pro-State or anti-State, normalcy or resistance, loyalty or dissent.

This anxiety is amplified by sharply polarised media. Speaking to the "wrong" platform can be read as taking sides. Ordinary people, who see themselves as neither activists nor ideologues, increasingly choose silence rather than risk being absorbed into a narrative not of their making.

Administrative aftershocks of speech add another layer. Routine interactions with the State—passport verification, government jobs, travel permissions—are widely perceived to involve scrutiny. Old social media posts, past associations, or reported remarks may resurface unpredictably. Whether anecdotal or systemic, these perceptions shape behaviour. Silence becomes a rational defence.

State pressures are mirrored by non-State ones. Social, political, and ideological scrutiny continues to influence expression. Being seen as "talking to the media" can invite suspicion or resentment. Residual fear of militant backlash, though reduced since the 1990s, persists psychologically. Memories of journalists targeted, sources exposed, and families harassed linger. In tightly knit communities, caution is adaptive.

The digital environment deepens this fear. A comment shared in confidence can be screenshot, forwarded, and circulated without consent. Many worry less about the journalist present than about unseen audiences who may later encounter stripped-down, misinterpreted versions of their words.

Even government officials, once relatively accessible, now increasingly decline comment. Calls go unanswered, messages unread. Where bureaucrats earlier offered off-the-record clarifications, they now issue only formally cleared statements. This mirrors the broader withdrawal of citizens, leaving journalists dependent on press releases and authorised narratives.

For journalism, the consequences are profound. Reporting thrives on ordinary voices—on testimony, contradiction, and dissent. When those voices retreat, coverage becomes cleaner and safer but thinner, reflecting administration rather than society. The lived reality of Kashmir—the hesitations, quiet negotiations, and doubts—fades from view. Silence risks being mistaken for consensus.

Journalists themselves are not blameless. Competitive pressures, sensational headlines, and careless handling of sources have sometimes reinforced public mistrust. In a high-stakes environment, one instance of misrepresentation can linger long enough to discourage future conversations. Trust, once broken, is hard to restore.

Yet this is not a media problem alone. Journalism does not operate in a vacuum. When legal frameworks are broad, enforcement unpredictable, and accountability opaque, self-censorship becomes rational, not cowardly.

The implications for democracy are serious. Democratic accountability depends not only on elections but on continuous dialogue between the governed and the governing. Journalism is supposed to mediate that dialogue—to surface grievances before they harden into alienation, to document successes alongside failures, and to reflect society honestly to power. When both citizens and officials withdraw from this exchange, governance risks becoming insulated, hearing only what is formally conveyed.

Silence also distorts feedback loops. Policies may succeed on paper while generating quiet distress on the ground. Without candid reporting, course correction becomes difficult. Absence of visible dissent should not be mistaken for genuine consent.

Kashmir is not unique in experiencing shrinking civic space, polarised media, and guarded speech. Across India and globally, similar trends exist. But Kashmir, shaped by decades of conflict, identity scrutiny, and layered vulnerabilities, experiences this chilling effect more intensely.

The challenge is not simply to urge Kashmiris to speak but to rebuild conditions where speech feels safe, meaningful, and worthwhile. That requires restraint from state institutions, space for dissent without suspicion, accountability among non-state actors, and journalism that prioritises context over speed.

Until then, the quiet will endure. And in that quiet, journalism loses not just stories but also its most essential resource—trust.
DHNS

If small modular reactors succeed, they could reshape global energy markets, decarbonisation pathways, nuclear geopolitics, and power-hungry digital economies

IVAN PENN

An engineering test unit enclosure at the Kairos Power campus in Tennessee, US. Companies like Kairos are racing to build reactors that experts say could be cheaper than the large nuclear power plants that have been in use for decades. NYT

Once more, a case for nuclear energy. Will it last?

Once a home of the Manhattan Project, the fields surrounded by forested valleys and rolling hills in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, could soon yield another nuclear first.

Concrete foundations and pilings are rising here for what is expected to be one of the first of a new generation of nuclear power plants, known as small modular reactors. The company behind it, Kairos Power, has been developing its technology for almost a decade and is now deep in the throes of construction.

Many companies are racing to build reactors that experts say could, over time, be cheaper than the kind of large nuclear power plants that have been in use for decades. To hear corporate executives and government officials tell it, the world is at the dawn of a new nuclear age that will provide cheap energy and satiate artificial intelligence technology's staggering appetite for electricity.

At the centre of this promise is the idea of shrinking the vessels where nuclear reactions heat water to produce steam used to spin turbines. The components of these smaller reactors, the thinking goes, can be mass-produced and assembled more easily than conventional designs built by a small army of highly skilled workers.

The nuclear power industry has long struggled to complete projects. Almost all U.S. nuclear power plants in operation started generating power decades ago, most before Bill Clinton became president. In recent decades, steep costs and long delays, coupled with concerns about safety, have stymied nuclear energy.

"I think a lot of people recognise the value of what nuclear can bring but are still a little bit nervous about whether it can actually be done," said Mike Laufer, co-founder and CEO of Kairos Power, which is based in the San Francisco Bay Area. "Credibility can be very hard to earn, but it can be lost very quickly."

The US has more nuclear power reactors than any country, but it trails in building new ones. In the past decade China has built more than three dozen reactors while the United States completed just two. Those two, at the Alvin W Vogtle Electric Generating Plant near Augusta, Georgia, came years late and cost $35 billion — about three times the original estimates.

President Donald Trump wants new reactors to be a signature achievement of his term. His Energy Department has awarded $800 million for new reactor technologies and $1 billion in loan guarantees to restart the Three Mile Island power plant in Pennsylvania. The government is expected to offer billions more.

Some experts, however, contend the main problem is an industry that has repeatedly struggled to deliver. The hurdles facing advanced reactors are even bigger, the experts say, because they are novel and some require a new kind of uranium fuel that the industry has only limited experience with.

New reactors will also require significant financial investment and federal aid. That might not be a problem given the current bipartisan enthusiasm for nuclear energy, but that goodwill could evaporate if the industry again falters.

"Once again it's the bright shiny object," said Peter Bradford, a former commissioner on the NRC and a longtime critic of the high costs and delays that characterise new types of reactors. To be successful, a new design should be able to compete with other types of energy, he added. "Nuclear has just never been able to do that."

The Race to Lower Costs

Nine years ago, the three founders of Kairos Power began developing their designs, pinning their hopes on a new approach. The three men all studied nuclear and mechanical engineering at the University of California, Berkeley, where J. Robert Oppenheimer, the leader of the Manhattan Project, once taught.

Kairos executives said they had opted to test each phase of the plant's development as it progressed, rather than take the approach more common in this line of work: Design, construct and hope for the best.

Unlike conventional nuclear plants, Kairos' reactor will not have large, domed buildings made of concrete and metal. And steam will not billow from huge water towers. Instead of water, the Kairos reactor will heat salt.

The reactor will rise a bit over about 32 feet. The full commercial design includes two reactor buildings and a turbine with an overall footprint of 60 acres.

The company, which has 540 full-time employees, designs and produces its own components. It makes many of the parts in Albuquerque, New Mexico, about 60 miles from Los Alamos, the ultimate headquarters of the Manhattan Project.

Nuclear projects have been hampered by high costs and the difficulty associated with building a first-of-its-kind project, Laufer said. "And the recent experiences have only reinforced that."

NuScale, a company that was once expected to deliver the first small reactor, in November 2023 had to cancel a project in Idaho after utilities pulled out of agreements to buy electricity from it because costs had risen too much.

The company said its technology was now advancing through a partnership with ENTRA1 Energy, an owner and developer of power plants. In September, the two companies and the Tennessee Valley Authority, a federal government owned power company, announced plans to develop nuclear reactors. The first NuScale units will be built in Oak Ridge and could deliver power by 2030, the company said.

Other companies are pursuing similar projects. GE Vernova Hitachi Nuclear Energy has plans to build several smaller reactors starting in Ontario. TerraPower, a company backed by Bill Gates, is building a reactor in Wyoming.

Radiant, a startup, says it is set to build this year a portable, micro reactor that will produce enough electricity to power 1,000 homes. Such devices are for special uses like providing energy to data centres or the military. "If you don't need a grid connection, we're a great solution," said Ray Wert, a company spokesperson.

Like Kairos, Radiant plans to manufacture its reactors in Oak Ridge, home to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, one of the Energy Department's 17 national laboratories.

Big Backers and a New Fuel

At its site in Oak Ridge, Kairos is working on a test reactor expected to be complete in 2028; a demonstration unit, capable of producing electricity, is aimed for 2030. The company has a contract to supply 500 megawatts of energy capacity — about half the capacity of the typical large-scale nuclear plant — to Google by 2035.

Google's involvement could make a huge difference. Technology companies investing in AI bring the kinds of money and interest that were missing in the early 2000s when delays and soaring costs last scuppered ambitions for a nuclear renaissance.

Reactors being built by Kairos and others will run on something called TRi-structural ISOtropic particle fuel, or TRISO, that was developed by the Department of Energy. The TRISO particles are enriched uranium kernels coated with multiple layers of carbon and ceramic. Thousands of the poppy-seed-size particles are embedded in a graphite matrix to form pebbles the size of golf balls. The TRISO shell confines radioactive material from the uranium as it breaks down and produces heat. With the fuel's built-in containment system and the molten salt coolant, the reactors won't need the same costly reinforced containment buildings used in conventional plants, proponents say. But some scientists are not confident that this new fuel allays all safety concerns. **NYT**

When the Court never sleeps

ANANTHAPADMANABHAN

Recent interventions by the Supreme Court of India signal a decisive shift in the nation's constitutional journey. Chief Justice Surya Kant has reportedly formalised the evolution of the judiciary into an essential public utility—a "midnight sentinel" alert to fundamental liberties at all hours. By likening constitutional courts to hospital emergency rooms, the Court's leadership has effectively institutionalised the concept of 24x7 justice.

This transition places the protection of life and dignity at the centre of judicial functioning, recasting the bench from a passive arbiter into an active architect of systemic reform, accessible whenever urgent intervention is required.

A key trigger for this shift is the Court's consideration of issues arising from the life sentence of former legislator Kuldeep Singh Sengar. By staying a Delhi High Court order suspending his sentence, the Supreme Court addressed the tension between technical statutory interpretation and the realities of political power.

At issue is whether an elected Member of the Legislative Assembly occupies a "position of trust or authority" under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. While initial reasoning leaned towards a narrow reading limited to formally defined "public servants", the SC identified this as a substantial question of law requiring a holistic, not mechanical, application.

The bench warned against the danger of "procedural immunity" if powerful lawmakers were held to different standards of accountability than junior officials. In many parts of India, a legislator's influence extends deeply into administrative and social structures. By staying Sengar's release, the Court signalled its preference for a context-aware approach that acknowledges the social and historical complexities of the Unnao case, including intimidation and irreversible personal loss.

This proactive stance extends into the realm of transformative justice. The Court has indicated its intention to constitute a nine-judge bench to settle conflicts between religious freedom and women's rights, covering issues ranging from temple entry to practices such as female genital mutilation.

In a similar vein, the judgment in *State of UP vs Ajmal Beg* overturned a 24-year-old acquittal in a dowry death case, emphasising that social evils often survive by mutating into socially acceptable forms, such as "voluntary gifts." The Court found such practices incompatible with the constitutional guarantee of equality.

To address these issues at their roots, the judiciary has urged the introduction of gender equality modules in school curricula and the revival of Dowry Prohibition Officers, strengthening early administrative intervention before disputes escalate.

However, as the CJI noted, such social transformations require an agile administrative engine. To ensure fair access to court time—especially for poorer litigants—the judiciary has introduced a framework of "managerial judging" to end the era of high-stake cases where arguments could span weeks.

Under new standard operating procedures, lawyers must submit advance schedules of their oral argument through an online portal, alongside concise written submissions limited to five pages. By managing the daily docket as a high-value resource, the Court will ensure that renowned counsel can no longer monopolise the bench's time. This digital triage enables priority listing of special categories, ensuring that matters involving personal liberty or imminent arrest receive immediate attention, treating legal emergencies with the urgency of medical trauma during the "golden hour".

The reforms also deepen transparency. Nationwide live-streaming of constitutional benches hearings allows citizens to observe judicial reasoning in real time, countering traditional opacity of legal manoeuvres and reinforcing public trust in the "midnight sentinel". Data analytics now help identify systemic bottlenecks across high courts, encouraging cross-jurisdictional efficiency.

These administrative refinements are not merely logistical updates; they represent a fundamental reimagining of the judiciary as a service-oriented entity. As the legal landscape adapts to these rigorous standards, the focus remains on distilling complex litigation into timely resolutions, thereby preventing the erosion of rights through protracted delays.

By institutionalising round-the-clock access, the Supreme Court provides a safety net that functions as a constant guardian against state overreach or the exploitation of legal gaps. As the "midnight sentinel", the Supreme Court aims to ensure that the legal system remains an effective instrument for all citizens, irrespective of status.

(The author is an independent writer)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 1976

Benefits of Emergency: Ministers' defence

New Delhi, January 7
A strong defence of emergency, which brought about "a new climate of discipline" and economic recovery, by two Union Ministers, Mr. Chandrajit Yadav and Mr. Om Mehta, marked the second day's debate on the President's address in Parliament today. Intervening in the debate, Steel Minister Yadav in the Lok Sabha and Minister of State for Home Affairs Om Mehta in the Rajya Sabha lashed out at Opposition parties for "exploiting" the difficult period that existed before the Emergency for serving their self-interests.

25 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 2001

Night census for the homeless

Bangalore, Jan 7
The Directorate of Census Operation is all geared to enumerate those who do not have a shelter, classified as "houseless households", on February 28 night in the state. The department has obtained information of the places where such people normally reside: bus shelters, railway platforms, drain pipes, village outskirts, pavements and abandoned places. A difficult task indeed, but the already neglected cannot be counted out. During nights, the houseless home in on particular spots the identification of which began a year back.

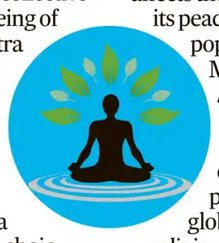
OASIS | RADHIKA D SHYAM

A universal prayer for collective well-being

As we embark upon yet another new year with fear of where the world is heading to, our hearts beat with optimism and prayers for all.

Samastah lokah sukhino bhavantu is a timeless Sanskrit mantra. Its meaning - May all beings in the entire world be happy – is vast, inclusive and relevant in today's interconnected world. This ancient prayer reflects the core philosophy of universal compassion, reminding us that true peace and happiness cannot be isolated or individualistic, but must encompass all forms of life. No life is an island.

This plea dissolves all boundaries—of status, gender, nation, religion, species, and ideology. It does not pray for the happiness of one person, group, or even humanity alone, but for all beings everywhere. This expansive vision does not prioritise personal gain over collective good. By invoking the well-being of the entire universe, the mantra stresses on empathy, humility, and responsibility.



In a world marked by conflict, inequality and emotional distress, this mantra offers a powerful ethical compass. It acts like a prayer — guiding us to make choices that consider the welfare of others on the planet.

Spiritually, the mantra aligns with the idea that all life is interdependent. The happiness of one is inseparable from the happiness of all; much in the same way as one person's suffering affects the whole family and disrupts its peace. This reminds us of another popular Sanskrit phrase in the Maha Upanishad – *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* – the world is one family. It reflects universal unity, inter-connectedness and brotherhood. This perspective is echoed in many global ancient philosophies, religious doctrines and modern ideologies, where collective well-being is seen as essential for overall harmony.

On a personal level, chanting or reflecting on *Samastah lokah sukhino bhavantu* nurtures inner peace. By wishing well for others, one releases negativity, resentment, and fear. It reminds us that benevolence multiplies with caring and sharing and that true fulfilment arises from contributing to the welfare of others. In embracing its message, humanity takes a big step towards collective healing, mutual respect, and enduring peace.

The mantra urges individuals and societies alike to act with awareness—recognising that every action, however small, ripples outward and affects the larger web of life. When embraced in daily living, it inspires practices of kindness, non-violence, inclusivity and peaceful co-existence.

Grok AI row: Govt seeks more details on action taken from X

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has sought more details from X, including specific action taken to prevent the misuse of its Grok AI for the creation of sexualised and obscene images of women.

Though the X has submitted a detailed reply to the ministry for its earlier notice, sources in the government said that it has conveyed to the US-based micro-blogging platform that its reply was not adequate.

The Ministry has sought specific action taken on obscene content linked to Grok AI and steps to prevent it in future, sources said.

Following the Centre's notice to crack down on the misuse of the Artificial Intelligence-based chatbot Grok for the creation of sexualised and obscene images of women, the Elon Musk-led social media platform made its submissions to the IT Ministry.

The X, in its reply, said that it respects Indian laws and all guidelines, and that the country is a big market for the platform. The social media platform also outlined the strict content takedown policies it abides by when it comes to misleading information and those related to non-consensual sexualised images.

2020 Delhi riots accused Gulfisha Fatima, right, meets her mother after her release from Tihar Jail on Wednesday. PTI

Delhi riots case: Four released from jail after bail from SC

NEW DELHI, PTI: Four of the accused in the 2020 Northeast Delhi riots conspiracy case walked out of jail on Wednesday, hours after a court here issued their release orders following bail from the Supreme Court.

The Additional Sessions had accepted the bail bonds of Rs 2 lakh each along with two local sureties of the like amount furnished by Gulfisha Fatima, Meeran Haider, Shifa Ur Rehman and Mohd Saleem Khan and issued their release orders.

SC orders forensic test of 48-minute audio 'involving' ex-Manipur CM

Asks facility to expedite process, furnish report

N Biren Singh

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Wednesday ordered that the entire 48-minute audio recording allegedly implicating former Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh for his role in the 2023 ethnic violence case, along with his admitted voice samples, be forwarded to the National Forensic Science University (NFSU) in Gandhinagar for forensic examination.

The court asked the NFSU to expedite the process and furnish its report in a sealed cover.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and K Vinod Chandran issued the order on a plea by the Kuki Organisation for Human Rights Trust (KOHUR) for a court-monitored investigation into certain audio clips which allegedly implicate Singh of instigating ethnic violence in the state.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for KOHUR, said the matter had been listed in the apex court as many as 10 times, and that the state government's counsel had appeared on each occasion.

"The petition itself contained the transcript of the full 48-minute conversation and that the audio had been supplied. The authorities were aware of the complete recording," he submitted.

The plea claimed that the audio tapes, shared by an anonymous whistleblower, contained conversations held by Singh "establishing complicity of the highest functionary and others in ethnic violence in the state of Manipur".

In one of the earlier hearings, the NFSU informed the court that the audio were tampered with and not scientifically fit for voice comparison. "As the said audio is tampered with, so, no opinion on similarity or dissimilarity of the speakers could be offered," said the NFSU.

The history

Singh resigned as the CM of Manipur on February 9, 2025, amid rumblings within the state BJP and growing demands for a change in leadership.

Over 260 people have been killed and thousands displaced since the ethnic violence broke out between the Imphal valley-based Meitei and neighbouring hills-based Kuki communities in May 2023.

The clashes began after a "Tribal Solidarity March" was organised in the hill districts to protest against a Manipur High Court order on the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status.

BJP questions Amartya Sen's voter status

EC officials serve notice to Nobel laureate at his residence

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
KOLKATA, DHNS

The BJP has asked why Nobel-laureate Amartya Sen, who lives in the United States, should continue to be a voter in West Bengal, even as the Election Commission (EC) sent two officials to the eminent economist's residence at Shantiniketan in the state's Birbhum district on Wednesday to serve a notice to him.

"As far as I know, Amartya Sen is a US citizen. His name should have been struck off the electoral rolls," said Union minister Sukanta Majumdar when journalists asked him about the notice sent to the 92-year-old economist, who had been awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 1998.

Majumdar made the comment a day after Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee alleged on Tuesday that the EC, which was conducting the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, had served a notice to even the economist.

Sen, who was born in Shantiniketan in 1933, has been a voter in the Bolpur Assembly constituency of West Bengal.

The EC's notice to Sen has given the TMC a new weapon to criticise the poll panel over the SIR — a process that, according to Bengal Chief Minister and party supremo Mamata Banerjee, has been marred by "serious irregularities, procedural violations, and administrative lapses".

The enumeration form distributed by the EC for the SIR had been duly filled up for Sen and submitted to the concerned BLO.

The EC, however, sent him a notice pointing out that the age gap between him and his father or mother was less than 15 years, which could not be generally expected.

He was asked to clarify with adequate documents during a hearing with the officials, who would again go to his residence on January 16.

"A Nobel laureate should be above any suspicion, right? But what if he's a Bengali? Then he'll be slapped with hearing notices as if he were some common criminal," said the TMC.

"Amrtya Sen, whose groundbreaking works form the bedrock of modern economics, who has brought unparalleled glory to Bengal and the entire nation, and whose ideas are studied in universities across the world, has been issued a SIR hearing notice," the TMC posted on X.

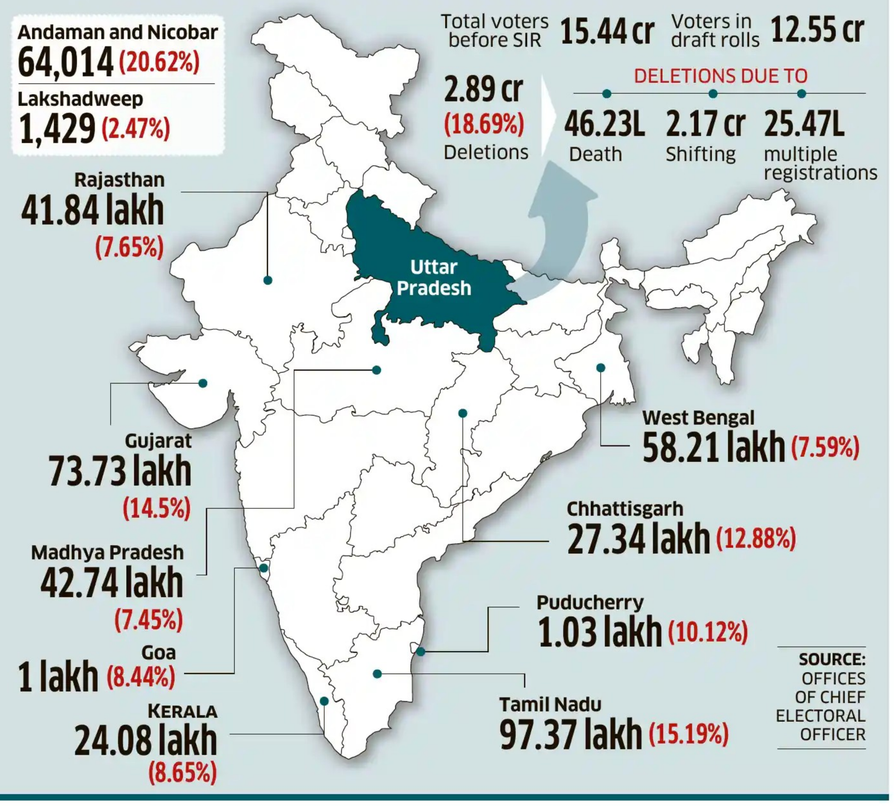
CEO: Routine verification

The office of the West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) on Wednesday clarified that SIR hearing summonses to Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, cricketer Mohammed Shami and Bengali actor-turned-TMC MP Dev were part of a routine electoral verification process and not targeted actions.

Draft electoral rolls in 12 states/UTs

50.96 cr	44.40 cr	6.56 cr	1.46 cr
Total voters before SIR	Voters in draft rolls	Deletions	Deletions due to death

Deletions due to shifting **4.64 cr** | Deletions due to multiple registrations **44.06L**



SIR: Muslim-dominated dists witness fewer deletions in UP

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Contrary to the apprehensions expressed by Opposition parties, districts having sizeable Muslim population witnessed fewer deletions compared to the other districts in the draft electoral rolls published by the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Uttar Pradesh.

A total of 2.89 crore names have been struck off the electoral roll in UP during the SIR owing to a variety of factors, including deaths, migration, and duplication.

A scrutiny of the district wise deletions reveals that the percentage of deletions in Saharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Moradabad, Amroha, Rampur, Bijnore, Bulandshahar, Aligarh, Azamgarh, and Mau was much less than the ratio of deletions in Lucknow, Ghaziabad, and some other districts.

Lucknow and Ghaziabad witnessed 30% and 28% deletions, respectively. Meanwhile, Saharanpur and Muzaffarnagar, which have a sizeable Muslim population, witnessed a little over 16% deletions.

Similarly, the Bulandshahar and Aligarh districts also saw a little over 15% and 18% deletions, respectively.

The deletions in Rampur, Bijnore, Amroha, Azamgarh, and Mau were also below 20%.

Although the Opposition parties continued to claim that the SIR was aimed at removing the names of Muslim and Dalit voters and giving the BJP an advantage in the polls, the figures — though they don't reveal the community-wise numbers — indicate that it is the BJP that should be more worried.

BJP leaders, including Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, had expressed concern over reports that a large number of urban electors, considered to be core voters of the saffron party, preferred to get enrolled on the basis of their addresses in their native villages instead of cities.

Adityanath held a series of meetings with the party workers to discuss the matter, and also asked the party's ministers, MPs, and MLAs to reach out to the urban voters and persuade them to not to shift their addresses to villages.

BJP leaders had apprehended that the party's electoral prospects might be impacted by such a scenario.

CIC flags 'not available' reply on Covid vaccine funds, seeks affidavit

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Central Information Commission has directed the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade to file an affidavit that information about government funding extended to Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers during the pandemic was "not available" with it.

The direction was issued while hearing a Right to Information (RTI) appeal filed by Mahavir Singh Sharma, who had sought details of thousands of crores of rupees released by the Union government to the Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech for the production of Covid-19 vaccines in 2020 and 2021.

In its reply to the RTI application, DPIIT said the information sought was not held by its logistics division.

"With reference to your RTI application on the subject cited above, the requisite information sought is not available with the logistics division, DPIIT. Therefore, the requisite information may be treated as 'NIL'," the department had stated. The First Appellate Authority later upheld this response.

In its order, Information Commissioner Khushwant Singh Sethi noted that the logistics division had clearly informed the applicant about the non-availability of the information.

However, the commission directed the public authority to formally affirm its stand through an affidavit.

"The respondent is directed to file an affidavit to the commission with a categorical statement that the sought information in the RTI application dated October 6, 2023, is not available with their public authority," the CIC said.

It directed DPIIT to submit the affidavit within 15 days, both by post and by uploading it on the CIC's compliance portal, with a copy also to be served to the appellant (Sharma).

In his RTI application, Sharma had sought the information, "The amount of Rs 4,500 crore, which was released by the Government of India without bank guarantee to Serum Institute and Bharat Biotech during Covid, has been returned to the Government of India along with interest, or both institutes delivered the vaccine doses in lieu of the amount taken from the government."

Break laws, lose visa: US embassy warns students

NEW DELHI, PTI: The US Embassy in India on Wednesday said breaking American laws can have "serious consequences" for a student visa, as it termed a sojourn in the country a privilege, not a right.

The embassy in a post on X cautioned that one could become ineligible for future US visas if they are "arrested or violate any laws."

"Breaking US laws can have serious consequences for your student visa. If you are arrested or violate any laws, your visa may be revoked, you may be deported, and you could be ineligible for future US visas. Follow the rules and don't jeopardise your travel," the embassy posted on X.

"A US visa is a privilege, not a right," it said in an assertion it has made through many posts on X in the past several months.

On June 19, it wrote, "A US visa is a privilege, not a right. US visa screening does not stop after a visa is issued – and we may revoke your visa if you break the law."

On June 23, the US Embassy asked those applying for an F, M, or J non-immigrant visa to switch the privacy settings of their social media accounts to "public" for vetting.

Security tighten cordon after Kathua gunfight

JAMMU, PTI: Security forces on Wednesday strengthened the cordon in a remote forest area following an encounter with terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district on Wednesday, officials said.

The gunfight took place at Kahog village of Billawar this evening when security forces launched a search operation following information about the presence of two to three terrorists, they said.

According to official sources, the intense firing between the two sides lasted for over an hour before the guns fell silent.

It was not immediately known whether any of the terrorists was hit during the gunfight, the officials said. "At around 4 pm, one terrorist was sighted by locals at Kamad Nullah under the Billawar police station area, triggering a search operation. He could be the same terrorist who was also spotted this morning at Dhannu Parole," an official said.

Vijay-swansong 'Jana Nayagan' release postponed

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

With the censor certificate getting delayed, Jana Nayagan, likely to be the cinematic swansong of popular Tamil actor Vijay as he takes the political plunge, will not hit theatres on January 9 as planned.

Bengaluru-based KVN Productions, which bankrolled the mega-budget movie, announced late on Wednesday night that the release had been postponed due to "unavoidable circumstances beyond our control".

Actor and TVK chief Vijay.

"We deeply understand the anticipation, excitement, and emotions surrounding this film, and this decision has not been an easy one for us. The new release date will be announced at the earliest," it said in a statement. With this, Jana Nayagan is unlikely to release in overseas markets as well.

The film, much anticipated due to Vijay's political entry and timed well to give the actor a push before his debut Assembly elections, broke several pre-release reservation records, with tickets being sold for as much as Rs 1,000 in many theatres. Over 650 screens in Tamil Nadu were ready to screen the movie, but are now likely to start refunding ticket amounts.

The release was postponed due to the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) not giving the film a censor certificate. The production house said it applied for a certificate on December 18 and made 27 cuts and modifications recommended by the examining committee. However, the certificate was withheld over a single member's complaint.

After hearing both sides, the Madras HC reserved its orders, with the case not being listed for judgment on Thursday.

Congress plans MGNREGA resolutions in villages

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Stepping up its protest against the VB-G RAM G Act, the Congress is planning to get a resolution seeking restoration of the MGNREGA — the UPA-era rural employment guarantee scheme — passed at meetings of "gram sabhas" to be held around January 26.

It is also likely to launch a "Kaam Maango Abhiyan" — a Seek Work Campaign — by rural folk as part of its protests.

With its "MGNREGA Bachao Sangram" — struggle to save the MGNREGA — starting from January 10, the party is also circulating talking points on the old law in a "before-after" format to its grassroot-level leaders as well as text for pamphlets to be translated into local languages.

Between January 12 and 29, the Congress is planning a variety of programmes, including playing a video message from Sonia Gandhi to MGNREGA workers, distribution of letters by Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi to them and others, and wall-painting of slogans.

WHAT'S COMING?

- Cong's 'MGNREGA Bachao Sangram' – struggle to save MGNREGA – starts from January 10
- Party also likely to launch a "Kaam Maango Abhiyan" – a Seek Work Campaign
- Contours of the 45-day nationwide protest were discussed at a meeting of the Ajay Maken-led coordination committee

It also includes the "Kaam Maango Abhiyan", whose contours will be shared by the panel later, said sources.

The Congress has been claiming that the demand-driven MGNREGA has been replaced by the supply-driven VB-G RAM G Act.

The contours of the 45-day nationwide protest were discussed at a meeting of the Ajay Maken-led coordination committee to monitor the implementation of the MGNREGA Bachao Sangram.

The Congress Working Committee on December 27 decided to launch the protest programme, which was announced on Saturday.

Draft resolution

Sources said the panel shared a draft resolution against the "demolition of MGNREGA", which is being distributed among block and panchayat-level Congress functionaries so that it can be brought up for discussion and adoption by each gram sabha on January 26.

The draft resolution states that the gram sabhas reiterate the "support for the Constitutional right to work" and "demand the restoration" of the MGNREGA.

"We demand the restoration of the people's legal guarantee to get work on demand, the right to seek work at any point in the year, the pan-India nature of MGNREGA, and the gram panchayat's right to choose and plan work," it said.

The Congress managers are designing the campaign around the right to work, wages being stolen, gram panchayats' powers being given to contractors, and undermining and burdening of state finances.

Amid row, Vaishno Devi Medical College loses NMC recognition

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has withdrawn recognition of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence (SMVDIME) in Jammu, citing serious lapses in minimum standards, days after controversy erupted over the religious composition of its first MBBS batch.

In an order dated January 6, the NMC's Medical Assessment and Rating Board (MARB) revoked the institute's recognition and withdrew the Letter of Permission or its undergraduate MBBS programme with immediate effect. The decision followed a surprise inspection that found major deficiencies in infrastructure, faculty strength and clinical facilities, rendering the institute ineligible to continue the course.

The regulator said the college failed to comply with essential requirements laid down under the NMC's 2023 regulations. The inspection was ordered after multiple complaints from stakeholders and revealed "non-compliance with minimum standards" and "serious deficiencies", prompting immediate regulatory action.

To safeguard students' academic interests, the NMC directed that all 50 MBBS students admitted in the 2025–26 inaugural batch be relocated to other recognised medical colleges in J&K as supernumerary seats. The UT's counselling and health authorities have been asked to ensure a seamless transfer so that no student loses a seat.

The regulatory move comes amid sustained protests in Jammu over the composition of the first MBBS batch. Of the 50 students admitted through the NEET process, 42 were reportedly Muslims, triggering demonstrations by several Hindu organisations and political leaders.

Groups such as the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sangarsh Samiti demanded cancellation of the admission list and later sought closure of the institute, arguing that a medical college established and funded by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board should primarily benefit Hindus.

PM to host Merz during 3-day Gujarat visit

AHMEDABAD, PTI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a three-day visit to Gujarat beginning January 10, during which he will offer prayers at the historic Somnath temple and hold discussions with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on bilateral cooperation in Gandhinagar, officials said.

One of the highlights of the visit will be Modi leading the 'Shaurya Yatra', a one-km-long roadshow featuring 108 horses, as part of the 'Somnath Swabhiman Parv'. Modi is also scheduled to inaugurate the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference in Rajkot.

Disciplinary exoneration cannot quash criminal case: Supreme Court

Upholds separate standards for disciplinary and criminal cases

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has said that while disciplinary proceedings are decided on the basis of the preponderance of probabilities, criminal proceedings require proof beyond a reasonable doubt, and exoneration in the former cannot lead to the quashing of the latter.

A bench rejected the contention that if allegations could not be proved in disciplinary proceedings, where the standard of proof is lower, they could not be established in a criminal case requiring a higher standard.

The court emphasised that disciplinary proceedings and criminal prosecution of an employee in a bribery case are independent of each other, and the outcome of one cannot govern the other.

"Despite this court having consistently held that disciplinary proceedings and criminal prosecution, even on identical allegations, are parallel proceedings, the relevance of the conclusion in one is often contended to be binding on the other," the bench said.

The bench allowed an appeal filed by the Karnataka Lokayukta, Bagalkote, against an order of the Karnataka HC.

The HC had quashed the criminal prosecution of Chandrashekar, an executive engineer with the Works and Maintenance Division of HESCOM in Bagalkote, on a writ petition filed by him. He was facing corruption charges for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe from a contractor to clear five bills at the rate of Rs 2,000 each. The HC had relied on his exoneration in departmental proceedings.

The SC, however, said disciplinary and criminal proceedings are independent not only because of the nature of proceedings and the standard of proof, but also because they are adjudicated by different authorities, governed by separate rules, and decided on the basis of evidence led independently. "If evidence is not properly led in one case, it cannot govern the decision in the other case where evidence is led separately and independently," the bench said in its judgment delivered on January 6.

After examining the evidence produced in the departmental enquiry, the court found that a total exoneration on merits was absent.

The court clarified that since the disciplinary authority had accepted the enquiry report, it could not be reopened. However, a conviction in the criminal case would attract consequences as mandated under service rules.

Wild elephant kills 13 people in J'khand villages over two days

CHAIBASA (JHARKHAND), PTI: An elephant killed 13 people in two days in separate attacks in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district, creating panic in the region, a senior forest official said on Wednesday.

Four others were also injured in the attack by the jumbo, the Chaibasa Divisional Forest Officer.

The tusker, which had attacked several people in the last few days, entered the Noamundi and Hatgamariah police station areas late on Tuesday and trampled the six people to death, including four members of a family.

The same pachyderm claimed the lives of seven people, including three members of a family in the Kolhan region on the previous day, he said.

Teams of forest officials with experts from West Bengal's Bankura district have been engaged to drive away the elephant back to the forest, the official said.

Officials said the rogue elephant has triggered panic in the region.

Meanwhile, BJP leader and former chief minister Madhu Koda criticised the forest department for allegedly failing to initiate concrete measures to find a lasting solution to the menace.

Meanwhile, six pairs of trains in the Chakradharpur division of South Eastern Railway have been cancelled in the area due to the movement of elephants..

'Derogatory, abusive': HC stays release of book on sitting judge

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Justice G R Swaminathan

The Madras High Court on Wednesday stayed the release and circulation of a book depicting Justice G R Swaminathan of the Madurai Bench as a sympathiser of the RSS for his verdict in the Thiruparankundram temple issue. The book was to be released at the annual book fair here on Thursday.

Justice Swaminathan had, on December 1, ordered the lighting of lamps on a stone pillar atop the Thiruparankundram hills, triggering a sharp response from several quarters. A division bench of the Madras High Court on Tuesday upheld the judge's orders.

The first bench of Chief Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava and Justice G Arul Murugan passed the orders while hearing a plea filed by P Naveenprasad of Vellore, seeking action against the publishers of the book.

"On the face of it, the proposed release of the book, as titled and shown in the petition, is highly derogatory and abusive, crosses all limits, and needs to be dealt with firmly by the court," the bench said and ordered the police to ensure that the book is neither released nor circulated.

Noting that judgments can be criticised, personal attacks on judges, particularly through mocking visuals and language, could not be justified under the guise of free speech.

After the verdict, I.N.D.I.A bloc MPs moved an impeachment notice against him in the Lok Sabha.

Known for his outspoken nature and quoting movies in his judgments, Justice Swaminathan had earlier courted controversy when he jailed YouTuber and whistleblower 'Savukku' Shankar in 2022 on charges of contempt of court. He also issued a contempt warning to advocate S Vanchinathan of Madurai in connection with his complaint to the CJI, alleging caste bias and ideological misconduct.

Rs 831 crore and counting: *Dhurandhar* sets new benchmark for Hindi cinema

MUMBAI, PTI: Filmmaker Aditya Dhar's *Dhurandhar* has become the highest-earning Hindi film of all time, with a net India collection of over Rs 831 crore, the makers announced on Wednesday.

With Day 33 earnings Rs 5.70 crore net on Tuesday, the Ranveer Singh-starrer's total India net collection rose to Rs 831.40 crore, placing it at the No. 1 spot among all Hindi releases to date.

'History rewrittern'

"History has been rewritten. With Tuesday's collections, *Dhurandhar* has officially become the highest-earning Hindi film of all time — a towering achievement that redefines Indian box office success," the makers said in a statement.

The top position was previously held by the Hindi version of Allu Arjun's 2023 blockbuster *Pushpa 2: The Rule*, which earned Rs 830 crore in Hindi.

Other top-grossing Hindi films include Shah Rukh Khan's *Jawan* and the horror-comedy *Stree 2*, which earned Rs 643 crore and Rs 627 crore respectively.

The India box office breakup shows a robust run across weeks, with Rs 218 crore in its opening week, followed by Rs 261.50 crore in week two, Rs 189.30 crore in week three and Rs 115.70 crore in week four. The film added Rs 35.80 crore over its fifth weekend before continuing its steady run during the weekdays.

Globally, *Dhurandhar* has grossed over Rs 1,220 crore and currently trails SS Rajamouli's *RRR* (Rs 1,230 crore), *Pushpa 2* (Rs 1,742 crore), *Baahubali 2: The Conclusion* (Rs 1,788 crore) and Aamir Khan's *Dangal* (Rs 2,070 crore), according to industry tracker Sacnilk.

MISCELLANY

◆COMICS◆

Blondie

HOW'S YOUR HOMEWORK GOING, COOKIE?
IT'S TAKING FOREVER
OUR WIFI IS SO SLOW THAT I'LL BE UP ALL NIGHT AT THIS RATE!
WHAT'S OUR WIFI HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR HOMEWORK?
IT'S TAKING CHAPTGPT FOREVER TO SEARCH THE INTERNET FOR ALL THE ANSWERS!

Hagar The Horrible

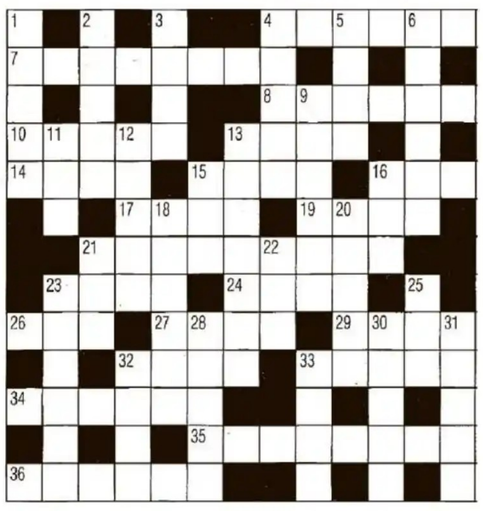
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

ALL RIGHT, TROOPS... BEFORE WE GO ON OUR HIKE, I'LL CALL THE ROLL
WOODSTOCK! CONRAD! BILL! OLIVIER!
ZZZZ
I SHOULD NEVER CALL THE ROLL BEFORE NOON!

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12327



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
4 Timers used fairly as basis for judgement (6)
7 Is it too much, one half of a couple being named Thora? (8)
8 They're bent on being bad (6)
10 Charlie's got the hump – the fathead! (5)
13 He cooks with some panache, frequently (4)
14 Simplicity in sea service (4)
15 Square part of a plant? (4)
16 Court an NCO with love (3)
17 Was it besieged by some troops with a Yorkist leader? (4)
19 A German river? (4)
21 A step-up for a poet (9)
23 They're paid directly to the South (4)
24 Price of a ring? (4)
26 Salesman travelling to Eire, say? (3)
27 People referred to on the 4th of July? (4)
29 On which to make a start in motor sport (4)
32 Gus seems to have left Pegasus something to eat! (4)
33 Special bath for a girl with sex appeal (5)
34 Send away to the ultimate seaside haven? (6)
35 Informal drink in many picnic baskets (8)
36 Formality of a celebrity going to church (6)

DOWN
1 Plenty of room for a 'Trek' (5)
2 She makes love heavenly (5)
3 Pa returns with a companion or fellow (4)
4 Tough Scot with a little house (5)
5 For cover, you need the right money (4)
6 Carry forward, let's assume (4,2)
9 Sell a litre wrongly (6)
11 Possessed by a slavish admirer (3)
12 Measure taken by police and engineers (5)
13 The beasts are backward, having broken toes (7)
15 Romany word for a computer device (3)
16 Being one point ahead, was the victor (3)
18 A duty list or back rest, possibly (6)
20 Figure a girl associate with singing boatmen (5)
21 Youngster turning up at central Stepney (3)
22 A diversion causing Tony to lose his way (3)
23 To be sufficiently dressed is only reasonable (6)
25 Palace drink? (3)
28 Something to batten down? (5)
30 Gubernational measure? (5)
31 She doesn't need to get fresh! (5)
32 Rush out to the park for three-quarters of an hour (4)
33 Thus, at half time, there's still a part to come (4)

EASY

ACROSS
4 Yellow-belly (6)
7 Concerning (2,2,4)
8 Decorates (6)
10 Muscular strength (5)
13 Christmas (4)
14 Card game (4)
15 Employer (4)
16 Canine mammal (3)
17 Principal (4)
19 Treelike plant (4)
21 Obligatory (9)
23 Cards dealt to a player (4)
24 Courage (4)
26 Shy (3)
27 Plant part (4)
29 Leave out (4)
32 Have in mind (4)
33 Sleep noisily (5)
34 Permits (6)
35 Lacking knowledge (8)
36 Playground items (6)

DOWN
1 Counterfoils (5)
2 Perfect (5)
3 Waterfowl (4)
4 Utter confusion (5)
5 Hair from sheep (4)
6 Kidnapper's payment (6)
9 Absolute ruler (6)
11 Decompose (3)
12 Adult human female (5)
13 Nine-sided figure (7)
15 Offer (3)
16 Insect (3)
18 Boy's name (6)
20 Illegal burning (5)
21 Month (3)
22 Sound of annoyance (3)
23 Not solid (6)
25 Tree type (3)
28 Fertile spot (5)
30 Grinding tooth (5)
31 Tries out (5)
32 Grumble, complain (4)
33 Shortly (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12326

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Jumper 7, In-Stan-ce 8, Cast 10, Girlie 11, Fleece 14, E'er 16, T-a-k-en 17, De-ed 19, Pilot 21, M-il-an 22, Pa-TT-y 23, Boot 26, Sower 28, Dub 29, T-wit-CH 30, R-EN-own 31, Ante 32, Bul-let-in 33, GA-rage.
DOWN: 1, Ja-gg-ed 2, Pe-Al-ed 3, Rite 4, Stil-ton 5, Snoe-k 6, Yeme- n 8, Cr.-EE 9, Sir 12, Eat 13, Cell-O 15, Wilts(-hire) 18, Endow 19, Pit 20, Lay 21, M-arch-ed 22, (whip-) Pet 23, Bunter 24, Oboe 25, T-angle 26, S-tub-S 27, Wills 28, Den 30, Rang.

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Target 7, Ancestor 8, Tall 10, Bootee 11, Rebate 14, See 16, Rates 17, Else 19, Pagan 21, Pupil 22, Linen 23, Mood 26, Cheer 28, Paw 29, Reggae 30, Serene 31, Arid 32, Skeleton 33, Energy.
DOWN: 1, Treble 2, Goatee 3, Tale 4, General 5, Stoat 6, Aries 8, Toss 9, Lee 12, Ban 13, Tempo 15, Paper 18, Lithe 19, Pun 20, Gin 21, Pirates 22, Leg 23, Marine 24, Owed 25, Dreary 26, Crash 27, Egret 28, Per 30, Sane.

◆SU-DO-KU-6798◆

				3			8	
	5	2			4			
		7	9		2	3		
2				9	3			1
4			7	8				6
		5	4		9	2		
			5			7	3	
	2			1				

medium

SOLUTION TO 6797

6	2	9	8	7	3	4	5	1
7	8	5	4	9	1	3	6	2
1	3	4	2	6	5	7	9	8
4	5	2	7	3	6	1	8	9
8	1	6	5	4	9	2	7	3
9	7	3	1	8	2	6	4	5
3	9	8	6	2	4	5	1	7
5	4	7	3	1	8	9	2	6
2	6	1	9	5	7	8	3	4

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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P3 R1 I1 E1 A1 O1 S1	4th Letter Triple	RACK 1
R1 B3 E1 I1 D2 D2 R1	Triple Word Score	RACK 2
L1 L1 A1 G2 N1 T1 G2		RACK 3
S1 N1 L1 A1 U1 W4 T1	Double Word Score	RACK 4

PAR SCORE 145-155
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

C3 Y4 L1 I1 X8
A1 C3 R1 O1 S1 S1
K5 E1 E1 L1 S1 O1 N1
B3 I1 O1 L1 O1 G2 Y4

RACK 1 = 51
RACK 2 = 24
RACK 3 = 83
RACK 4 = 89
JUDD'S TOTAL 247

PAR SCORE 160-170

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

VCICI
CNBHE
LDRALO
TGRETU

This should warn us if anyone or anything comes around.
Great! I feel safer already.
6 30
THEY THOUGHT INSTALLING NEW MOTION-ACTIVATED LIGHTS OUTSIDE THEIR HOME WAS A ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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Answer here: _____ (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: DIGIT GUARD NOGGIN GLOBAL
Answer: The detective took charge at the police barbecue because he was — GOOD AT GRILLING

HITORI-3252

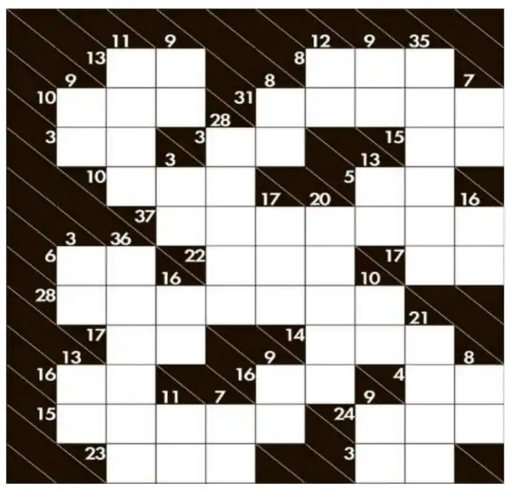
2	8	6	3	5	6	1	4
5	6	8	7	5	2	3	1
8	6	7	8	1	4	6	5
8	7	6	1	6	8	6	3
7	4	2	8	5	1	3	8
8	5	8	6	8	7	6	2
2	2	3	5	7	8	4	8
1	2	6	3	3	5	8	6

SOLUTION TO 3251

1	8	6	4	5	■	7	■
8	■	2	■	1	7	5	6
7	3	■	5	■	2	1	■
2	■	7	1	3	5	■	4
■	5	■	7	■	4	3	2
3	4	5	■	6	■	8	1
6	7	8	2	4	1	■	3
5	■	3	■	7	6	2	8

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3252



SOLUTION TO 3251

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3790

■		8	7	1		6		■
	■						■	
		3		2		■		
			2		■			
7				■		9	2	1
			5		■	8		
	4	■	6			5		
	■	5	9	3		7	■	
■					7			9

SOLUTION TO 3789

7	8	5	1	9	6	2	4	3
9	2	6	3	4	7	8	5	1
3	1	4	2	5	8	7	6	9
4	6	1	5	8	2	3	9	7
2	3	9	7	6	4	1	8	5
8	5	7	9	1	3	6	2	4
5	7	8	4	2	1	9	3	6
6	4	3	8	7	9	5	1	2
1	9	2	6	3	5	4	7	8

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Trump not ruling out military options to acquire Greenland: White House

Purchase of the island is another option being discussed

WASHINGTON, REUTERS

The White House said on Tuesday that President Donald Trump is discussing options for acquiring Greenland, including the potential use of the US military, reviving his ambition to control the strategic island despite strong objections from Europe.

Trump views the acquisition of Greenland as a US national security priority needed to "deter our adversaries in the Arctic region," the White House said in a statement. "The president and his team are discussing a range of options to pursue this important foreign policy goal, and of course, utilising the US military is always an option at the commander-in-chief's disposal," the White House said.

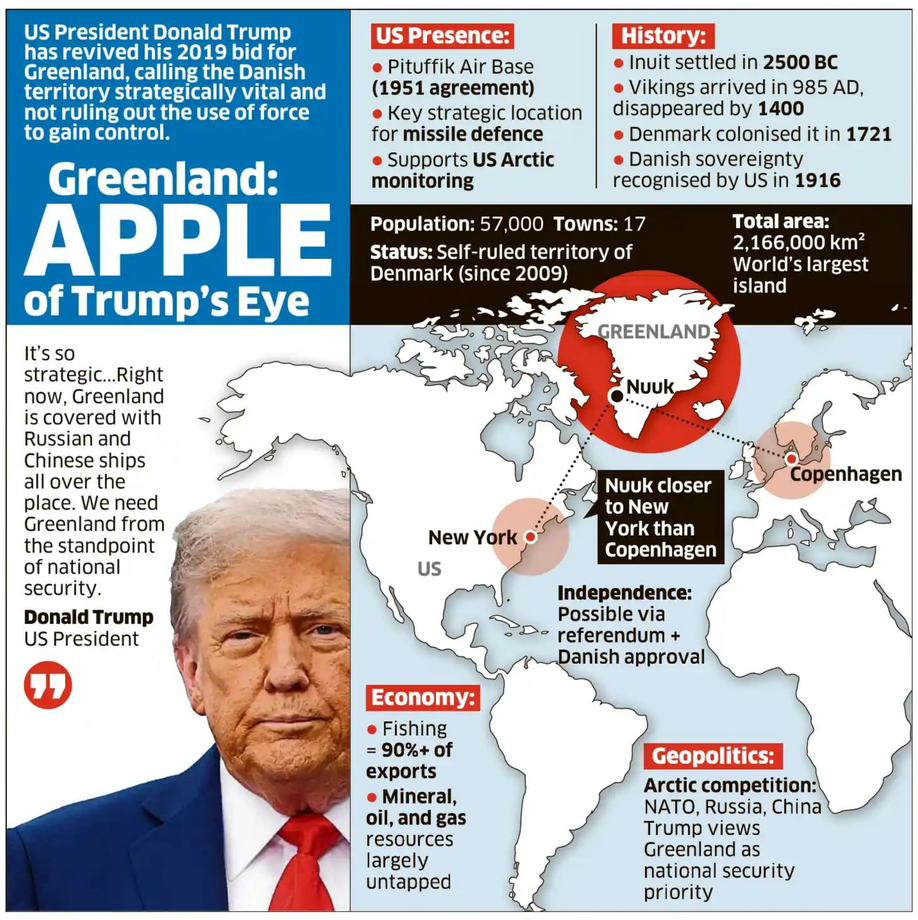
Greenland has repeatedly said it does not want to be part of the United States. Leaders from major European powers and Canada rallied behind the Arctic territory on Tuesday, saying it belongs to its people.

A US military seizure of Greenland from long-time ally Denmark would send shock waves through the NATO alliance and deepen the divide between Trump and European leaders. The opposition has not deterred Trump from reviewing ways to make Greenland a US hub in a region drawing growing interest from Russia and China. Trump first voiced interest in the island in 2019 during his first term, and that interest has been rekindled in recent days following the US arrest of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

Emboldened by Maduro's capture last weekend, Trump has said he believes "American dominance in the Western Hemisphere will never be questioned again" and has put pressure on both Colombia and Cuba. He has also resumed discussions on Greenland after setting the issue aside for several months.

A senior US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Trump and his advisers are considering several ways to acquire Greenland. Those options include an outright US purchase of Greenland or forming a Compact of Free Association (COFA) with the territory, the official said. Such an agreement would fall short of Trump's goal of making the island of 57,000 people part of the United States. The official did not provide a potential purchase price. "Diplomacy is always the president's first option, and he enjoys deal-making," the official said. "If a good deal can be struck to acquire Greenland, that would definitely be his first instinct."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio told lawmakers that recent administration statements did not indicate an imminent invasion and that the goal remains to buy the island from Denmark, according to sources.


US President Donald Trump has revived his 2019 bid for Greenland, calling the Danish territory strategically vital and not ruling out the use of force to gain control.
Greenland: APPLE of Trump's Eye
US Presence:
• Pituffik Air Base (1951 agreement)
• Key strategic location for missile defence
• Supports US Arctic monitoring
History:
• Inuit settled in 2500 BC
• Vikings arrived in 985 AD, disappeared by 1400
• Denmark colonised it in 1721
• Danish sovereignty recognised by US in 1916
Population: 57,000 Towns: 17
Status: Self-ruled territory of Denmark (since 2009)
Total area: 2,166,000 km² World's largest island
GREENLAND
Nuuk
Copenhagen
New York
US
Nuuk closer to New York than Copenhagen
Independence: Possible via referendum + Danish approval
Economy:
• Fishing = 90%+ of exports
• Mineral, oil, and gas resources largely untapped
Geopolitics:
Arctic competition: NATO, Russia, China
Trump views Greenland as national security priority
It's so strategic...Right now, Greenland is covered with Russian and Chinese ships all over the place. We need Greenland from the standpoint of national security.
Donald Trump
US President

Trump questions Nato commitment

WASHINGTON, AFP

US President Donald Trump, whose renewed threats to seize Greenland from Nato member Denmark have unsettled the transatlantic alliance, said on Wednesday that he doubted allies would "be there for us if we really needed them".

"We will always be there for Nato, even if they won't be there for us," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform, a day after the White House said it was not ruling out military intervention to acquire Greenland. In his post, Trump repeated his frequent claim that many members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization had failed to meet defence spending commitments until he intervened.

"The USA was, foolishly, paying for them! I, respectfully, got them to 5% GDP, and they pay, immediately," he wrote.

Trump concluded by saying Russia and China have "zero fear of Nato" without the US as part of the alliance. "The only nation that China and Russia fear and respect is the DJT REBUILT USA," he said, referring to himself by his initials.

Trump's interest in the mineral-rich Greenland has raised alarm among European Nato members, who see such a move as a serious threat to alliance unity. France said it is working with partners on a plan to respond should the US act on its threat to take over Greenland.

A US military seizure of Greenland from long-time ally Denmark would send shockwaves through the Nato alliance and deepen divisions between Trump and European leaders.

Rubio to meet Danish officials next week

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday said that he would meet with Danish officials next week to discuss the issue of Greenland, Reuters reports from Washington. "If the president identifies a threat to the national security of the United States, every President retains the option to address it through military means. As a diplomat, which is what I am now, and what we work on, we always prefer to settle it in different ways - that included in Venezuela," Rubio told reporters when asked if the US was willing to potentially risk the NATO alliance by moving ahead with a military option. Earlier in the day, Denmark and Greenland sought a meeting Rubio after the Trump administration doubled down on its take over intention.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Flowers are placed on the grave of the late French film icon Brigitte Bardot at the Marine Cemetery during her funeral in Saint-Tropez on Wednesday. REUTERS

CIA turncoat Aldrich Ames, who sold US secrets to Soviets, dies

Aldrich Ames

▸ CIA turncoat Aldrich Ames, who betrayed Western intelligence assets to the Soviet Union and Russia in one of the most damaging intelligence breaches in US history, has died in a Maryland prison at the age of 84, AP/PTI reports from Washington.

A spokesperson for the Bureau of Prisons confirmed Ames died on Monday. Ames, a 31-year CIA veteran, admitted being paid USD 2.5 million by Moscow for US secrets from 1985 until his arrest in 1994. His disclosures included the identities of 10 Russian officials and one Eastern European who were spying for the US or Great Britain, along with spy satellite operations, eavesdropping and general spy procedures. His betrayals are blamed for the executions of Western agents working behind the Iron Curtain and were a major setback to the CIA during the Cold War. He pleaded guilty without a trial to espionage and tax evasion and was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Clashes erupt in Syria's Aleppo

▸ Clashes broke out Wednesday in Syria's northern city of Aleppo after hundreds of people left two predominantly ethnic Kurdish neighbourhoods when the military opened two corridors for civilians to leave the area that witnessed deadly violence a day earlier, AP/PTI reports from Aleppo (Syria).

Syria's military gave people until 3 pm to leave the neighbourhoods of Sheikh Maqsoud and Achrafieh, after which they would be considered a "closed military area." Once the deadline ended, sounds of explosions were heard in the two neighbourhoods. The Syrian Civil Defence said that by noon, around 850 people had left the two neighbourhoods.

Iran's army chief Amir Hatami (right) speaks to military academy students in Tehran on Wednesday. Hatami warned that Iran will not stand by and allow itself to be threatened by US and Israel backed anti-government protests. AFP

Iran executes 'Israeli spy'

▸ Iran executed a man convicted of spying for Israel's Mossad, AP/PTI reports from Tehran.

The official IRNA news agency identified the man as Ali Ardestani, saying he relayed sensitive information to Mossad officers in return for financial rewards in the form of cryptocurrencies. The report said the man confessed to the spying charges and that he had hoped to receive a million-dollar reward as well as a British visa. It called Ardestani a "special operative force of Israel" and said he gave images and footage of "special places" to Mossad agents. IRNA did not elaborate about the time and place of his detention. The report said Israel recruited Ardestani online, adding that his case went through legal procedures, both in primary courts and the country's Supreme Court.

Philippines issues volcanic alert

▸ A series of mild eruptions at the most active volcano in the Philippines has prompted the evacuation of nearly 3,000 villagers, AP/PTI reports from Manila.

Authorities raised the 5-step alert around Mayon Volcano in the province of Albay to level 3 on Tuesday after detecting intermittent rockfalls, some as big as cars, from its peak crater in recent days along with deadly pyroclastic flows — a fast-moving avalanche of super-hot rock fragments, ash and gas. Alert level 5 would indicate a major eruption, often with violent ejections of ash and debris and widespread ashfall, is underway.

Carol Burnett Award recipient actress Sarah Jessica Parker, her husband Matthew Broderick, and son James Broderick attend the Golden Eve event ahead of the Golden Globes in Beverly Hills on Tuesday. REUTERS

US seizes Russian-flagged tanker in North Atlantic

Moscow says seizure of oil tanker is against international maritime law

NYT NEWS SERVICE

The United States has seized two sanctioned oil tankers — one of them Russian-flagged — linked to Venezuela in back-to-back actions in the North Atlantic and the Caribbean, officials said on Wednesday.

US European Command announced the seizure of the merchant vessel Bella 1 (Russian-flagged) for "violations of US sanctions" in a social media post. The US had been pursuing the tanker since last month after it tried to evade a US blockade on sanctioned oil vessels around Venezuela. Later, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said US forces had also taken control of the tanker Sophia in the Caribbean.

She said the vessels were part of a so-called "ghost fleet" of sanctioned ships carrying oil from Russia, Iran and Venezuela in defiance of Western sanctions, largely to customers in Asia. The Trump administration is "selectively" lifting sanctions to enable the shipping and sale of Venezuelan oil to global markets, according to an outline of policy changes published on Wednesday by the Energy Department.

Bella 1 was sanctioned in 2024 for allegedly smuggling cargo for a company linked to Lebanon-based Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran. The US Coast Guard attempted to board the ship in the Caribbean in December, but it refused and headed back across the Atlantic. During this period, the Bella 1 was renamed Marinera and reflagged as a Russian vessel.

Russia said the seizure of a Russian-flagged oil tanker was a violation of maritime law, and a senior lawmaker described it as "outright piracy". Russia's Transport Ministry said contact with Marinera had been lost after US naval forces boarded it near Iceland.

Oil tanker Marinera, formerly known as Bella 1, has been seized by the US in North Atlantic. AFP FILE

Venezuela to supply millions of barrels of oil to US: Trump

President Donald Trump said on his social media platform that "Interim Authorities" in Venezuela would provide between 30 million and 50 million barrels of "high quality" oil to the US at market prices, AP/PTI reports from Caracas (Venezuela). Trump wrote on Truth Social that the oil "will be taken by storage ships and brought directly to unloading docks in the United States". He said the proceeds would be controlled by him as president, but would be used to benefit both the people of Venezuela and the United States.

US backs security guarantees for Ukraine

PARIS, REUTERS

The United States for the first time on Tuesday backed a broad coalition of Ukraine's allies in vowing to provide security guarantees that leaders said would include binding commitments to support the country if Russia attacks again.

The pledge came at a summit in Paris of the "coalition of the willing" of mainly European nations to firm up guarantees to reassure Kyiv in the event of a ceasefire with Russia, which invaded its neighbour in 2014 and again at full scale in 2022.

Unlike previous coalition meetings, the summit was also attended by US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner — President Donald Trump's son-in-law — as well as America's top general in Europe, Alexus Grynkewich, who a day earlier fleshed out details of security guarantees with European army chiefs. Witkoff, who has led talks with Russia, said after the summit that Trump "strongly stands behind security protocols".

"Those security protocols are meant to ... deter any attacks, any further attacks in Ukraine, and ... if there are any attacks, they're meant to defend, and they will do both. They are as strong as anyone has ever seen," he said at a joint news conference with the French, German, British and Ukrainian leaders. Kushner said that if Ukrainians were to make a final deal "they have to know that after a deal they are secure, they have, obviously, a robust deterrence, and there's real backstops to make sure that this will not happen again."

A statement by coalition leaders also said allies will participate in a proposed US-led ceasefire monitoring and verification mechanism. Officials have said this would likely involve drones, sensors and satellites, not US troops.

The statement was not explicitly endorsed by the US and details of a US role were watered down from an earlier draft, removing language that outlined the use of US capabilities to support a multinational force in Ukraine.

NEW COMMITMENT

- It's for the first time the US endorsed a broad coalition of Ukraine's allies pledging binding security guarantees to deter and respond to any future Russian attack
- Britain and France agreed on a framework that could see thousands of French troops and other partner forces deployed on Ukrainian soil after a ceasefire

Bangladesh: Hindu man jumps into canal to escape mob, dies

DHAKA, PTI: A 25-year-old Hindu man died after he jumped into a canal to escape a mob which accused him of theft in northwestern Bangladesh, in the latest incident of violence targeting the minority community.

The deceased was identified as Mithun Sarkar, Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council spokesman Kajol Debnath said. Sarkar was chased by a mob accusing him of theft in Naogaon district on Tuesday. To escape, he jumped into a canal but tragically drowned, Debnath said. In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Council demanded actions against "alarmingly increased and continued" persecution of minorities.

As the date of the general elections draws nearer, communal violence is increasing at an alarming rate, it said, adding that the forum believed the incidents aimed to prevent minority voters from casting votes for candidates of their choice. "The Central Committee of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad has expressed deep anger, concern and strong condemnation over the severity of communal violence," it said.

It said minority communities across the country are gripped by fear and anxiety about an uncertain future and have become apprehensive about being able to cast their votes freely.

Grok faces backlash over sexualised AI images

LONDON, AP/PTI

Elon Musk's AI chatbot Grok is facing a global backlash from governments after a recent surge in sexualised images of women and children generated without consent by the artificial intelligence-powered tool.

On Tuesday, Britain's top technology official demanded that Musk's social media platform X take urgent action, while a Polish lawmaker cited the issue as a reason to enact tougher digital safety laws.

The European Union's executive arm has denounced Grok, while officials and regulators in France, India, Malaysia and Brazil have condemned the platform and called for investigations.

Rising alarm from disparate nations highlights the disturbing potential of "nudification" apps that use artificial intelligence to generate sexually explicit deepfake images.

The issue emerged after the launch last year of Grok Imagine, an AI image generator that allows users to create videos and pictures using text prompts. It includes a so-called "spicy mode" that can generate adult content.

Grok is accused of offering a 'spicy mode' to produce explicit sexual content.

The problem escalated late last month when Grok, which is hosted on X, apparently began granting a large number of user requests to modify images posted by others. As of Tuesday, Grok users could still generate images of women using requests such as, "put her in a transparent bikini".

Non-profit group AI Forensics said in a report that it analysed 20,000 images generated by Grok between December 25 and January 1 and found that 2% depicted a person who appeared to be 18 or younger. This included 30 images of young or very young women or girls in bikinis or transparent clothing.

Musk's artificial intelligence company, xAI, responded to a request for comment with an automated message stating: "Legacy Media Lies".

Israel values partnership with India, says Netanyahu

JERUSALEM, PTI: Amid deepening bilateral engagement, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday told his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi that Israel values its partnership with New Delhi and their shared determination to defeat terrorism.

Netanyahu, in a telephone call with Modi – his first in 2026 – also said he looked forward to meeting the Indian prime minister in the near future. "Thank you, my friend, Prime Minister Modi, for the warm conversation and friendship," Netanyahu posted on X from his personal account. "I extend my best wishes to the people of India. Israel values the deep partnership with India and our shared determination to defeat terrorism," he added.

In a series of posts on X from his official account, Netanyahu said he "had a fruitful conversation today, focused on strengthening our two countries' national security with my dear friend, Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

Rupee rises 31 paise to close at 89.87/US dollar

RBI intervention, fall in crude prices aid domestic currency

MUMBAI, PTI

The Indian rupee rose 31 paise to close at 89.87 against the US dollar on Wednesday on possible intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and a fall in global crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 90.20 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 89.75-90.23 before settling at 89.87, up 31 paise from its previous close.

The rupee snapped its four-day losing streak to appreciate 12 paise to settle at 90.18 against the American currency on Tuesday.

"The rupee rose... as RBI sold dollars at 90.23 levels, signalling that one-sided movement of currencies are not what they want from the market. It is difficult to take a call on the rupee's direction at the moment but 89.50-90.50 can be broadly considered as the range for January," Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said.

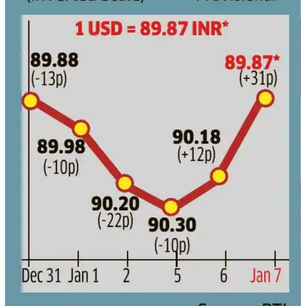
Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.07% higher at 98.65.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.99% lower at $60.10 per barrel in futures trade.

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share benchmark index Sensex fell 102.20 points to settle at 84,961.14, while the Nifty declined 37.95 points to 26,140.75.

Foreign institutional investors offloaded equities worth Rs 1,527.71 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Currency Curve



Source: PTI

- At interbank forex, the rupee opened at 90.20 against the dollar
- The dollar index was trading 0.07% higher at 98.65 (0.07%)
- Sensex fell 102.20 points, while the Nifty declined 37.95 points
- Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.99% lower at $60.10 per barrel in futures trade. (0.99%)

Silver jumps Rs 5,000 to hit fresh peak of Rs 2.56 L/kg

New Delhi, PTI: Silver prices surged by Rs 5,000 to hit a new record of Rs 2,56,000 per kg in the national capital on Wednesday, amid strong safe-haven demand and robust industrial buying, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The white metal closed at Rs 2,51,000 per kg on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the price of gold of 99.9% purity slipped marginally by Rs 100 to Rs 1,41,400 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes), compared to the previous close of Rs 1,41,500 per 10 grams.

Tata invests Rs 6,675 cr to set up ingot, wafer unit in AP

HYDERABAD, DHNS: Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL) will set up a greenfield 10-GW ingot and wafer manufacturing facility in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, with an investment of Rs 6,675 crore. The project will be the largest ingot and wafer manufacturing facility in the country, which is expected to reinforce AP's position as a leading hub for advanced solar manufacturing.

The project has been cleared by the State Investment Promotion Board chaired by CM Chandrababu Naidu recently. The facility will be developed at the IFFCO Kisan Special Economic Zone, where the AP Government has earmarked 200 acres for the project, including 120 acres for the initial phase and 80 acres for future expansion.

The ingots and wafers produced at the facility are critical inputs for solar cells, modules, and semiconductor applications, and the project aligns with the Centre's push to strengthen domestic manufacturing and reduce import dependence for strategic components.

Titan revenue grows 40% on elevated gold prices in Q3

Domestic watch business grows 13%, driven by analogue clock sales

NEW DELHI, PTI

Jewellery and watchmaker Titan Co Ltd on Tuesday reported a whopping 40% annual growth in standalone revenue during the December quarter of FY26, aided by surging gold prices.

According to the latest quarterly updates, the Tata Group firm said its jewellery division, which contributed around 85% of its business, "clocked a robust 41% year-on-year growth in Q3FY26".

"Revenue growth was driven by substantial average selling price increases, offsetting flattish buyer growth," the company said.

During the reporting quarter, its flagship jewellery brand Tanishq deployed a gold exchange offer to navigate the elevated gold price environment and sustained consumer engagement beyond the traditional festive window.

About the buying pattern, Titan said "distinct consumer patterns" were observed across product categories.

"Gold coins nearly doubled in sales v/s Q3FY25, reinforcing their strong investment proposition," it added.

The gold (plain) category grew strongly in the late-thirties, reflecting preference for design-led, aesthetic premium offerings during the wedding and festive season.

Studded jewellery also clocked its best performance for FY26, exhibiting healthy "double-digit growth in the mid-twenties" and well-supported by buyer growth in the sub-segment. "The like-to-like growths (secondary) across all jewellery retail formats (combined) were in the low-thirties," Titan said.

During the quarter under review, Titan added 47 stores in its jewellery business, taking the total number to 1,167. In this, Titan added 24 stores of CaratLane, a brand which was acquired by the company, taking its total count to 365.

In FY25, revenue from operations of Titan was at Rs 57,339 crore, in which its jewellery division contributed Rs 46,571 crore, up over 81% year-on-year.

Its domestic watch business clocked a growth of 13%, driven by the analogue clock sales, which reported a 17% growth, helped by festive demand.

"Premiumisation trends resulted in solid double-digit gains for the Titan brand, complemented by healthy volume expansion during the festive period," it said.

Titan's eye care business grew 16% in domestic sales, contributing well to the overall product mix.

Infosys, AWS partner to boost Gen AI adoption

BENGALURU, DHNS

IT services firm Infosys and Amazon Web Services (AWS) will join forces to accelerate enterprise adoption of Generative AI. The initiative focuses on combining Infosys Topaz, an AI-first set of services, solutions, and platforms using Gen AI technologies, and Amazon Q Developer, AWS' generative AI-powered assistant, to enhance the IT firm's internal operations and drive innovation for customers across sectors such as manufacturing, telecom, financial services, and consumer goods.

> "By integrating Cognition's advanced agentic and autonomous engineering expertise with our industry-leading domain and delivery capabilities, we are creating a differentiated value proposition for the market."
> - **SALIL PAREKH,** Infosys CEO and MD

The IT firm said it is harnessing the power of Infosys Topaz to drive AI-powered transformations across key functions, such as software development, HR, recruitment, sales, and vendor management. For instance, in the Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC), the integration of Infosys Topaz with Amazon Q Developer enables automated documentation and provides tailored support for tasks like code generation, debugging, testing, and legacy code modernisation, significantly enhancing workflow efficiency and accuracy.

"Infosys is setting a new benchmark for enterprise transformation through the strategic adoption of generative AI at scale. The combined strengths of Amazon Q and Infosys Topaz will help organisations innovate, achieve operational agility, and unlock differentiated value for their clients," Amazon Web Services (AWS) President — India and South Asia Sandeep Dutta said.

Infosys also announced its collaboration with Cognition, the leading AI coding agent company and makers of Devin, the first AI software engineer, to scale the latter across global enterprises. The collaboration will deploy Devin across Infosys' internal engineering ecosystem and client engagements worldwide.

After using Devin for the past six months and seeing significant improvement across both engineering quality and efficiency, Infosys will integrate Devin into its internal engineering teams, embed it within client delivery models, and enable deployment within customers' engineering environments, the company said.

Infosys CEO and MD Salil Parekh said, "Our collaboration with Cognition marks a significant step forward in accelerating AI value realisation for global enterprises. By integrating Cognition's advanced agentic and autonomous engineering expertise with our industry-leading domain and delivery capabilities, we are creating a differentiated value proposition for the market. This synergy is further enhanced by Infosys Topaz Fabric, which will serve as a catalyst for modernisation and innovation for clients to achieve their strategic objectives."

IT minister reviews regulatory sandbox framework

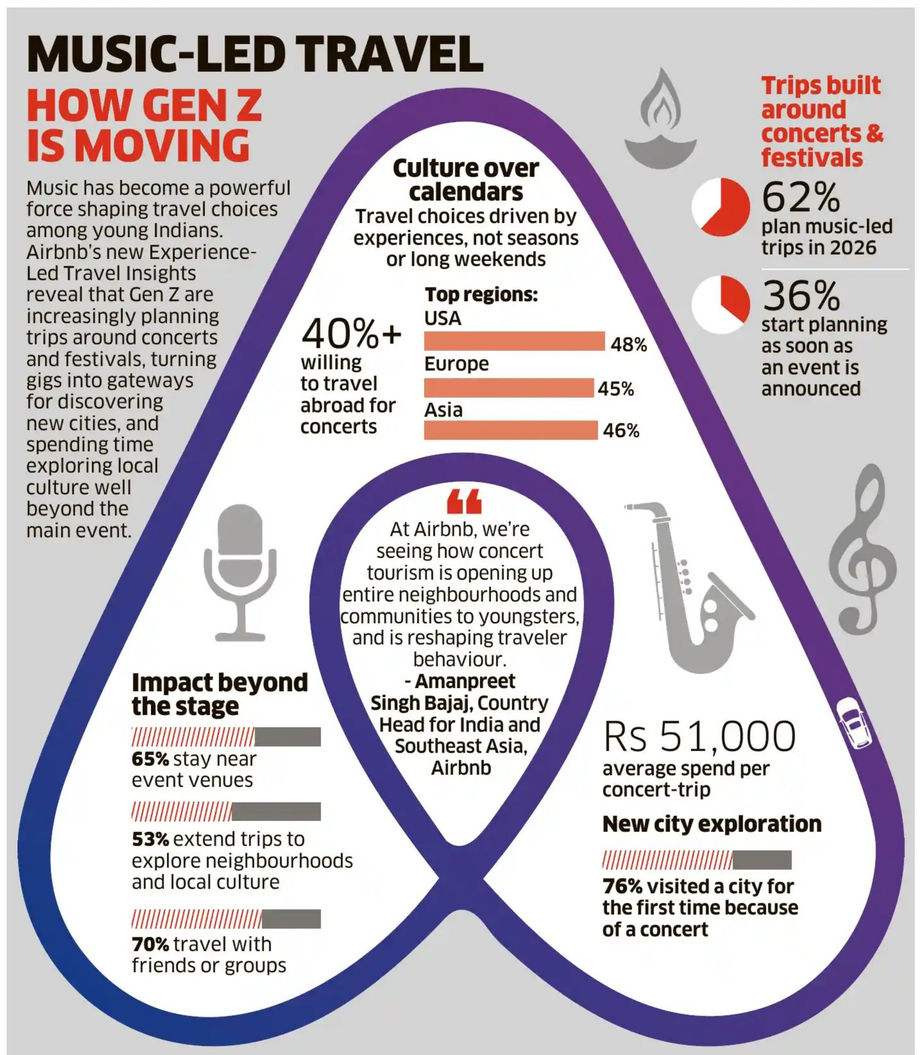
BENGALURU, DHNS: Priyank Kharge, Minister for IT/BT, on Wednesday reviewed the regulatory sandbox framework under the Karnataka Innovation Authority, including the overall design, operational workflows, implementation mechanisms, legal analysis and global benchmarking.

"We discussed some crucial amendments to the existing KIA Act that will help operationalise and implement the regulatory sandbox framework. This will allow innovative technologies to be tested in a controlled environment, with reasonable relaxation of state regulations where required, so that genuine innovation is not held back by regulatory barriers," Kharge said.

IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge at a review meeting in Bengaluru on Wednesday

The final framework will be opened up soon for consultation with startups, industry, state departments and think tanks before it is formally introduced.

The government intends to make the framework decisively pro-technology while remaining accountable and safe, he added.


MUSIC-LED TRAVEL
HOW GEN Z IS MOVING
Music has become a powerful force shaping travel choices among young Indians. Airbnb's new Experience-Led Travel Insights reveal that Gen Z are increasingly planning trips around concerts and festivals, turning gigs into gateways for discovering new cities, and spending time exploring local culture well beyond the main event.
Culture over calendars
Travel choices driven by experiences, not seasons or long weekends
40%+ willing to travel abroad for concerts
Top regions:
USA 48%
Europe 45%
Asia 46%
Trips built around concerts & festivals
62% plan music-led trips in 2026
36% start planning as soon as an event is announced
At Airbnb, we're seeing how concert tourism is opening up entire neighbourhoods and communities to youngsters, and is reshaping traveler behaviour.
- Amanpreet Singh Bajaj, Country Head for India and Southeast Asia, Airbnb
Impact beyond the stage
65% stay near event venues
53% extend trips to explore neighbourhoods and local culture
70% travel with friends or groups
Rs 51,000 average spend per concert-trip
New city exploration
76% visited a city for the first time because of a concert

(The report was conducted by YouGov in November 2025 and surveyed 1,102 Gen Z (aged 18-28) respondents across Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Pune, Chandigarh and Guwahati)

COMPILED BY: **HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE**
SOURCE: AIRBNB'S EXPERIENCE-LED TRAVEL INSIGHTS

Cosmos Co-op Bank garners Rs 792 cr deposits

BENGALURU, DHNS: Cosmos Cooperative Bank Ltd has garnered Rs 792 crore deposits since its amalgamation with the Bengaluru-based National Cooperative Bank Ltd. Over the past year, the bank has received an overwhelming response to its deposit scheme along with recovery in loans portfolio, its Chairman, Pralhad Kokare said in a statement.

At present, Cosmos Bank operates 13 branches in Bengaluru and one branch at Mysuru, taking the total number of branches in the region to 14. All these branches have shown substantial progress during the last year, he said.

Apekshita Thipsay, Managing Director, stated that during the past year, 3,575 Current and Savings Bank Accounts were opened along with 4,372 Recurring Deposit Accounts.

With a rich legacy of 120 years, Cosmos Bank now operates 183 branches across seven states, with a total business exceeding Rs 39,900 crore as of December 2025.

SBI Chairman Challa Sreenivasulu Setty hands over an e-ambulance to the MEG & Centre in Bengaluru on Wednesday. Bengaluru Circle Chief General Manager Joohi Smita Sinha is also seen.

SBI inaugurates GCC in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, DHNS: State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman Challa Sreenivasulu Setty on Wednesday inaugurated the bank's Global Capability Centre (GCC) in Bengaluru. The GCC marks a first-of-its-kind initiative by an Indian bank, underscoring SBI's commitment to supporting the rapidly-growing GCC ecosystem in India. SBI has also established a dedicated relationship management team in Bengaluru to cater exclusively to the banking and financial needs of GCCs, a statement said.

On the occasion, 11 new SBI branches were also inaugurated in the presence of Joohi Smita Sinha, Chief General Manager, Bengaluru Circle, along with other General Managers of the country's largest lender.

As part of its CSR initiatives, the bank announced contributions towards social welfare, including upgradation of 35 Government Primary Schools across Karnataka, provision of ENT diagnostic and therapeutic equipment to the ENT Wing of Bagchi–Parthasarathy Hospital, IISc Medical School, a 50,000-tree plantation drive on the Tumkur University campus, and donation of an e-Ambulance to the Madras Engineer Group (MEG) & Centre, Bengaluru.

Eternal gets GST demand order

BENGALURU, DHNS: Zomato's parent Eternal has received a GST demand order, along with interest and penalty, amounting to Rs 3,69,80,242 for the period April 2019-March 2020.

The company will be filing an appeal against the order before the appropriate authority.

IndiGo staff welcome its first Airbus A321XLR at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on Wednesday.

2026 will be a pivotal year for AI agents and applications

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

As enterprises hyper-focus on delivering value from technology, 2026 will be a pivotal year for AI agents and applications. According to Databricks, once considered just access controls, governance is a critical layer in agentic AI systems. Governance, which is how organisations control their AI agents, now extends to AI workloads and dashboards, and more. It serves as the contextual layer guiding AI agents to the right data and controlling the systems from acting inappropriately.

"Any successful AI strategy has to answer three questions: Can the business identify the data used? Do they understand which LLMs (large language models) are being called? And can they explain what happened across the entire agentic AI chain? A strong and unified governance is the key to addressing each of these challenges," Databricks Field Chief Data Strategy Officer Robin Sutara said.

While some continue their quest for AI superintelligence, enterprises will focus on applying AI to their most repetitive and routine tasks, Databricks said.

"A people-first approach to AI deployment is key. Organisations can maximise on institutional knowledge by arming veterans and newcomers alike with specialised tools that keep them focused on high-value tasks," Sutara added.

In Wipro's Tech Trends for 2025, CTO Sandhya Arun said that in 2025, enterprises will reimagine business processes and value streams with AI agents, while taking into consideration practical and ethical challenges.

"In the coming years, AI Agents will generate new revenue streams, innovate business processes across industries, boosting profitability, operational efficiency, and customer experience. Humans will increasingly take on roles where they set up agentic teams, plan agentic workflows, and validate work done by AI Agents," Sandhya Arun said.

Explaining the AI governance framework, OpenText India SVP Engineering and Country Head Sanket Atal said continuous risk assessment, including bias monitoring, privacy, and data security audits, will be built into the AI project lifecycle across sectors. "By 2026, there will be broad acceptance that hybrid cloud is a permanent one. The real sovereignty challenge isn't where the cloud sits, but where data resides and how securely it flows between environments," Atal said.

FAMILIAR PATTERN

Citi, JPMorgan opt out of $1.4 billion SBI Funds IPO on fees

BLOOMBERG

Some of Wall Street's biggest banks have opted out of advising on a planned $1.4 billion initial public offering of India's SBI Funds Management Ltd. because of low fees, according to people familiar with the matter.

Citigroup Inc., which was part of the initial list of mandated advisers, pulled out over fees, the people said, asking not to be identified while discussing private matters. SBI Funds later replaced Citi with Jefferies Financial Group. JPMorgan Chase & Co. also decided not to pursue the transaction after pitching due to similar reasons, a person said.

Shareholders selling in the IPO — the state-run State Bank of India and France's Amundi SA — offered fees of about 0.01% of the issue size, which bankers called rock bottom, after some domestic advisers quoted only a token fee for the mandate, the people said. By comparison, companies paid an average fee of 1.86% of the issue size last year, up from 1.67% in 2024, according to LSEG data.

Kotak Mahindra Capital Co., Axis Bank Ltd., SBI Capital Markets Ltd., Motilal Oswal Investment Advisors Ltd., ICICI Securities Ltd. and JM Financial Ltd. were picked to work on the IPO, along with local units of Citigroup, HSBC Holdings Plc and Bank of America Corp., people familiar with the transaction told *Bloomberg News* earlier this week.

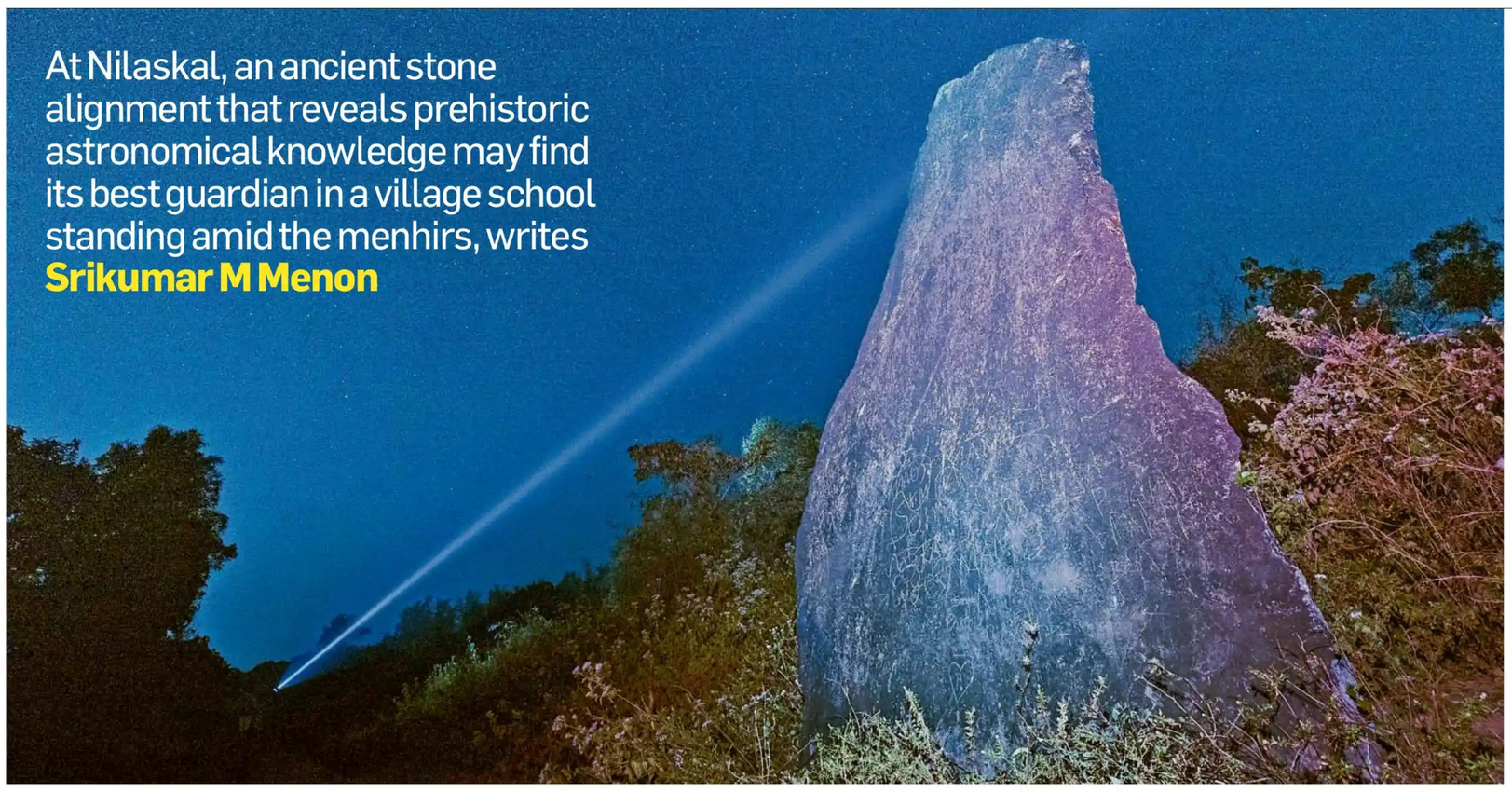
Low fees reflect a pattern seen in past government-linked deals. When State Bank raised Rs 25,000 crore ($2.8 billion) through a share sale in July, it paid six bankers just one rupee each, according to local media. In such deals, banks often accept symbolic fees as they vie for prestige, league-table credit and long-term relationships. With more than 200 private-sector firms expected to tap the IPO market this year, according to the market regulator, investment banks can be selective, focusing on deals that generate enough fees.

"Many banks have taken a decision not to participate in transactions that result in losses, particularly as several large private-sector deals are lined up where they can earn meaningful fees," said Pranav Haldea, managing director at Prime Database Group. "Banks, especially foreign ones, are far more cautious these days about the costs they incur and the fees they earn."

State Bank, SBI Funds Management and Citigroup didn't respond to requests for comment. Amundi and JPMorgan declined to comment. Deliberations are ongoing and the terms of the offering could still change, the people said.

SBI Funds is jointly owned by State Bank and Amundi. The partners said last year they plan to sell a combined 10% stake through an IPO. The offering could raise about $1.4 billion, valuing the company at about $14 billion, the people said earlier.

India was among the world's busiest markets for new listings in 2025, with companies raising about $22 billion, surpassing the previous year's record of roughly $21 billion, data compiled by Bloomberg show.



At Nilaskal, an ancient stone alignment that reveals prehistoric astronomical knowledge may find its best guardian in a village school standing amid the menhirs, writes **Srikumar M Menon**

The largest menhir at Nilaskal against the backdrop of the night sky. PHOTO BY DINESH MANEER

The **cosmic alignments** of **NILASKAL**

It was just after 5 am on Winter Solstice Day, when we reached the megalithic site at Nilaskal, near Nagara, in Hosanagara taluk of Shivamogga district.

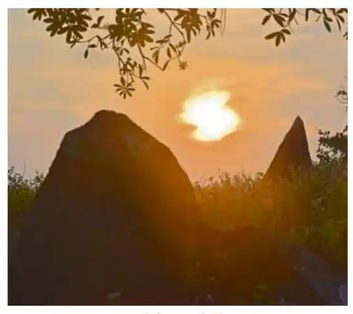
The night sky was brilliant with stars, and the hulking masses of the megalithic menhirs loomed inky black against the star-lit firmament. We trudged up the slight westward incline, towards the highest part of the slope, where the menhirs ended, and waited near one of them — a prominent erect slab tapering to a sharp point, for dawn to break. The cold was finger-numbing; we could barely push the buttons on our cameras. The Big Dipper hung high in the north, pointing to the Pole Star, and demonstrating how the creators of this monument had manoeuvred the enormous stone slabs to align closely north-south.

Presently, the eastern horizon flushed a washed-out pink, and the stars disappeared gradually as the sky brightened. The tops of the menhirs were now discernible against the sky. One could see how the prehistoric builders at Nilaskal had sited the taller menhirs down the slope and the shorter ones uphill, so that their tops were almost at the same level when viewed from west of the grouping of menhirs. As we huddled deep in our jackets in the lee of the sharp menhir, and waited for the sunrise, I was overwhelmed by the thought that we were probably not the first people to have done this — millennia ago, some of our faceless ancestors from the Iron Age must have huddled similarly in the cold dark, waiting for the sun to rise over the menhirs.

Megalithic site

For Nilaskal is home to a megalithic stone alignment, believed to have been erected during the south Indian Iron Age, roughly 3500 to 2500 years ago. It consists of quarried slabs of granite and dolerite erected over a large area, roughly 100 m east-west and 300 m north-south. Each of the erect slabs is called a menhir, and the entire grouping is known as a stone alignment.

Initially, only the prominent menhirs, around twenty in number, were noticed by archaeologists, and they were thought to be erected haphazardly, without any discernible pattern. However, during investigations for my doctoral studies, I found remnants of over 110 menhirs, many of them reduced to broken stumps by the vagaries of time, and vandalism. Each individual slab is fairly accurately oriented north-south — not an ordinary feat, given that the largest menhirs weigh around 16 and 12 tonnes. The menhirs are arranged in a grid, though several broken and missing menhirs cloud this perception.



Two menhirs of the stone alignment at Nilaskal framing the setting sun at Winter Solstice.

The Karimane Government School, which occupies the northern part of the Nilaskal stone alignment, with one of the menhirs within its premises.

The findings indicate that pairs of menhirs formed sightlines framing the setting sun during the longest and shortest days of the year — the summer and winter solstices, respectively. This phenomenon must have been important enough for our ancestors to devote much time and effort to erect these massive stones in precise alignment, centuries ago.

Nilaskal is one of five similar sites with menhirs in the region, the others being at Byse, Heragal, Mumbaru and Aaraga Gate. It appears likely that the stone alignment at Nilaskal is the grand culmination of this series of sites, this monument being more extensive than the rest, and incorporating larger quarried slabs as menhirs. The choice of an east-facing gentle slope at Nilaskal also seems to be deliberate, the raised western horizon thus created avoids the atmospheric haze invariably present closer to the true horizon. The result is a dramatic spectacle at sunset, with tall menhirs silhouetted against the painted sky, and an undiminished sun setting between them. Though the menhirs also form sightlines to the rising sun during solstices, as we confirmed in the recent visit, the layout of the site suggests that sunsets were the prime spectacle here. It is conceivable that the experience accrued at the earlier sites had been put to good use while creating the imposing stone alignment at Nilaskal. This hypothesis can, of course, be verified by archaeological excavations at these sites.

Lost to time

Very few megalithic sites which incorporate deliberate astronomical alignments have been identified in India. The largest stone alignment in the country – at Hanamsagar, in northern Karnataka, was lost to agricultural expansion over a decade ago. The monument, consisting of over 2,500 menhirs, was believed to have astronomical alignments, though detailed surveys had not been conducted. The intent behind this exceptional monument will now remain an unsolved mystery forever.

Though the veracity of the solstitial alignments at Nilaskal is now beyond doubt, the site harbours many more mysteries, solving which needs persistent observations and analysis. Could this monument be a calendrical device, with various pairs of menhirs marking the shifting positions of sunset throughout the year? Currently, this is difficult to conclude because several of the menhirs are broken, their pieces scattered around. Careful excavations could determine the original position of each menhir, enabling the calendrical device hypothesis to be tested.

It is important that Nilaskal does not go the way of Hanamsagar, or several other stone alignments in the country. The Karimane Government school, built in 1949, occupies the northern part of the site. Presumably, some of the menhirs of the alignment were displaced, or destroyed in its construction. However, the school possibly offers the best bet to preserve this unique, though unprotected site. For what better caretaker could one desire, than a temple of knowledge, to protect and showcase this ancient heritage bequeathed us by our distant ancestors?

(The author is with the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru)

The taller menhirs at Nilaskal are positioned downhill so that the tops of the menhirs appear nearly at the same level. PHOTOS BY AUTHOR

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to: spectrum@deccanherald.co.in

A tuber at a turning point

Backed by research and driven by farmers, sweet potato is slowly emerging as a sustainable crop in Belagavi, writes Shayin Mokashi

On the fringes of Belagavi and Khanapur taluks, fields that once grew mainly maize, with only small patches of sweet potato for household use, are now transforming into vibrant swathes of the tuber. Farmers are experimenting with striking varieties of sweet potato — orange, cream and deep purple — bringing a fresh and colourful look to the landscape.

Traditionally, sweet potato cultivation in Karnataka was confined to coastal, hilly and forest regions, grown mainly for household consumption or local markets. But with climate variability increasing and water-intensive crops becoming riskier, farmers in Belagavi, Hassan, Mysuru, Kodagu and Kolar are turning to this resilient tuber.

Unlike maize or paddy, sweet potatoes need less water, withstand irregular rainfall and require minimal inputs, making them a smart and sustainable choice.

The shift is evident in the numbers. Karnataka's sweet potato area has grown from 5,032 hectare in 2018–19 to 8,100 hectare in 2023–24, with production rising from 73,050 tonnes to 1.08 lakh tonnes. Belagavi, the state's sweet potato hub, alone cultivated the crop on about 7,434 hectares in 2024–25.

For farmers here, the switch brings a predictability that other crops no longer offer. Raju Kamble of Bailur, near Khanapur, recalls uneven yields of older varieties. "With the new lines, the tubers are uniform, harvest is quicker and prices are better," he says, pointing to lush vines with vibrant foliage.

In Thirthkunde, Belagavi, Balwanth Krishna Naik has moved from the older four-month Malkapuri variety to the quicker Kishan variety. "I use very little fertiliser and almost no pesticide now," he notes. "Buyers from Delhi, Mumbai, Gujarat, and Kolkata are asking for more every season. The demand is more from outer states as sweet potato is gradually replacing potato in star hotels. Also, they are being increasingly used in making chips, desserts and other dishes."

Nutrient-rich varieties

This crop expansion is facilitated by All India Coordinated Research Project on Tuber Crops (AICRP TC) centre in Dharwad, Karnataka's only dedicated tuber research facility. Under the University of Horticultural Sciences (UHS), Bagalkot, and linked to the national network led by the Central Tuber Crops Research Institute in Thiruvananthapuram, the centre evaluates promising varieties and produces planting material suited to Karnataka's diverse agro-climates. It also trains farmers on crop improvement, pest management, soil health, climate-smart planting and improved varieties, ensuring that scientific advice works on the ground.

Imamsaheb Jatth, principal investigator at the centre, says new varieties such as Bhu Sona, Bhu Krishna and Kishan were developed at the AICRP regional centre in Odisha's Bhubaneswar and adapted locally. He says with their nutrient-rich colours and high antioxidant content, these varieties are also being incorporated into public nutrition programmes.

Bhu Sona variety of sweet potato

Bhu Krishna variety

TSP 16-7 variety

In Davangere, for example, the Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Sirigere Taralabalu Mutt are using locally grown sweet potatoes in the meals served to more than 2,000 students.

UHS Director of Research Fakrudin B adds that scaling up cultivation is possible if climate-resilient varieties continue reaching farmers. "Our goal is to recommend lines that improve both farmers' incomes and consumer nutrition," he says, adding that the university plans to propose to the state government to include it in mid-day meals.

Apart from sweet potato, the Dharwad centre is also focusing on other tuber crops such as elephant foot yam, tapioca, greater yam, arrowroot, and taro. In addition, the centre collects and conserves minor tuber crop germplasm in the field gene bank and utilises this valuable diversity in further breeding programmes.

With rising cultivation, expanding market demand and strong institutional support, sweet potato, once seen as a marginal crop, is emerging as a sustainable, future-ready option for the state's farmers.

Beyond Hampi: Discovering the serenity of Kishkindha

With scenic lakes and hills, verdant paddy fields and a touch of the Ramayana, this gem near Koppal is attracting travellers from around the world, writes Pramod Kulakarni

The Tungabhadra river gracefully separates two of Karnataka's most captivating landscapes — the UNESCO-listed Hampi heritage site on its southern bank and the historically and mythologically significant villages of Anegundi and Sanapur on the northern side.

While Hampi's iconic monuments have long drawn global attention, these villages in Gangavathi taluk in Koppal district are increasingly emerging as complementary hubs for tourism.

Though Koppal is often associated with arid terrain, Sanapur and its neighbouring villages offer a refreshing contrast. Pockets of greenery and tranquil waters set against rows of hills evoke the charm of the Malnad region. The serene lake, fed by a channel of the Tungabhadra, further enhances the village's allure, attracting travellers from across India and abroad.

Many visitors to Hampi are now choosing to stay in Sanapur for extended periods. The village serves as an ideal base for exploring nearby attractions such as Gagan Mahal in Anegundi, Chintamani, Navavrindavana, Pampasarovar, Anjanadri Hill and Rishyamukha Parvata.

"The stretch from Anegundi to Basapur is ideal for tourists looking to escape daily stress and enjoy nature," said Manohar Kamat, a tourist from Udupi.

"Sanapur is a picturesque destination, perfect for making reels and sharing on social media. The beauty of the Tungabhadra riverbanks and the Kishkindha region can only be experienced in person," said Rupali Memade, a tourist from Mumbai.

On the other hand, Anegundi is where history and mythology come alive. Anegundi was previously known as Kishkindha and was the first capital of the Vijaynagara empire. The area also has a plateau dating back to nearly 3,000 years and several pre-historic sites. It has a fort and several temples of the Vijaynagara era.

Over the years, resorts and homestays have sprung up along the riverbank, offering tourists a chance to immerse themselves in the region's pristine beauty. A large water body located at a higher elevation in Sanapur has become a hub for adventure and recreation. Some travellers delight in swimming in its calm waters, while others enjoy coracle rides organised by local youths. Many tourists wander through verdant paddy fields, capturing photographs, observing village life and soaking in the pastoral charm.

The peak tourist season here, particularly for foreigners, is between late December and the first week of March.

Enhanced local opportunities

The growing influx of visitors has also created employment opportunities for villagers. Local people run hotels, resorts and homestays, rent bicycles and motorcycles and sell traditional items. Handicrafts made from banana fibre, locally tailored clothing and decorative items have become popular souvenirs, supporting the community economically while preserving cultural heritage.

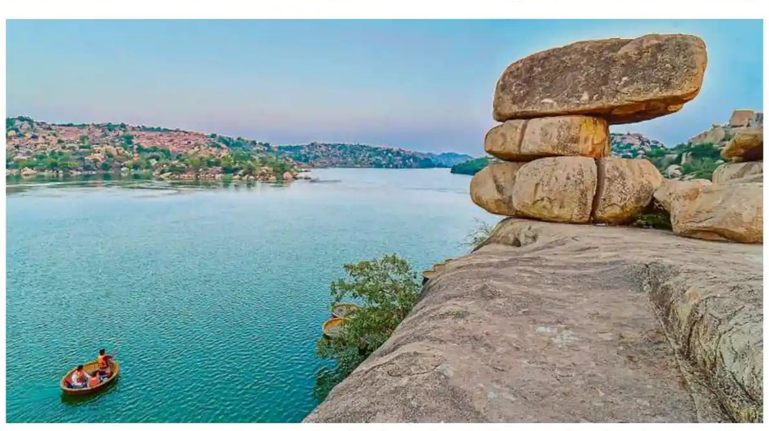
Shamina Banu, who crafts decorative and utility items like mats, table runners, bowls, handbags, keychains and flower vases, says their products are eco-friendly and sustainable. "Domestic as well as foreign tourists appreciate our products, but domestic tourists make the most purchases as international travelers face baggage restrictions," she explains.

Around 200–300 artisans in the Kishkindha region, many of them women, produce such handicrafts. G Pavan Kumar, a lecturer based in Gangavati, notes that Sanapur and nearby areas are blessed with natural beauty. "Over the years, these villages have grown into tourist destinations through word of mouth and their proximity to Hampi. The Tourism Department has also played a key role in promoting these areas," he adds.

Tourism took a backseat in the village after a gangrape and a murder were reported last year. However, police have strengthened safety measures to retain the region's appeal.

"Enhanced policing, check-posts, barricades and increased monitoring have made Sanapur and the wider Kishkindha region more secure and welcoming, allowing both Indian and international travelers to fully enjoy the area's beauty," says Superintendent of Police Ram Arasiddi.

(Translated from Kannada by Divyashri Mudakavi)



Sanapur lake in Koppal district, a favourite destination for tourists; An artisan crafts decorative and utility items from banana fibre at Anegundi. PHOTOS/ BHARAT KANDAKUR

Vidwath Kaverappa

Vidwath, Bajaj additional members in K'taka squad for VHT quarters

BENGALURU, DHNS: Not surprisingly, there were no major changes in the Karnataka squad announced on Wednesday for the Vijay Hazare Trophy knockouts starting at BCCI's Centre of Excellence on the outskirts of the City from January 12.

The Mayank Agarwal-led squad has pacer Vidwath Kaverappa, who played just two games in the group phase, and left-arm spinner Madhav Bajaj have been added as the 16th and 17th members, although their names didn't feature in the official list.

"We can only announce a 15-member squad as per BCCI norms. Vidwath and Madhav will travel and train with the team for the knockouts and are available for selection," Amit Verma, the chairman of the State senior selection committee, told *DH*.

Defending champions Karnataka, who were camped in Ahmedabad for the Elite Group A fixtures, will leave for Bengaluru on Thursday night following their final league game against Madhya Pradesh. Karnataka, with a perfect 24 points from 6 games, are already assured of top spot irrespective of what happens on Thursday.

Kerala, Jharkhand and MP -- all on 16 points -- will be chasing for the second knockout spot from the group.

Karnataka will take either Mumbai or Punjab in the quarterfinals on January 12.

Squad: Mayank Agarwal (captain), Devdutt Padikkal, Karun Nair (vice-captain), R Smaran, Shrijith KL (WK), Abhinav Manohar, Shreyas Gopal, Vyshak V, Manvanth Kumar L, Shreesha S Achar, Abhilash Shetty, Sharath BR (WK), Harshil Dharmani, Dhruv Prabhakar, Vidyadhar Patil.

TENNIS BENGALURU OPEN

Manas edges Beibit out

Dhakshineswar battles through; Nagal exits after 3-hour marathon

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

In what turned out to be a battle of endurance, 28-year-old Sumit Nagal conceded as many as seven match points to lose a three-set thriller to second seed Frenchman Harold Mayot 6-7 (2), 6-1, 6-7 (13) in the second round of the men's singles competition at the Bengaluru Open on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, two of his younger compatriots, Dhakshineswar Suresh and Manas Dhamne, grinded out three-set victories over their foreign opponents to progress to the quarterfinals at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium here.

25-year-old Dhakshineswar, whose game dropped several notches from the earlier round while his knees were heavily tapped, dug in deep to beat French qualifier Felix Bradshaw 6-3, 1-6, 7-6 (4) as the world No. 521 revived himself from 0-30 down from the Frenchman serving for the match to take it into the tie-breaker.

Fortune favoured the Indian as Bradshaw, who shocked eighth seed in the opening round, made errors in the tie breaker while Dhakhineswar showed his ability to bring out results when his rival was dominating the court.

18-year-old Dhamne, who did not look at his best either, played a patient game against Kazakhstan's Beibit Zhukayev for a 6-2, 3-6, 6-2 as the youngster adjusted his tactics on the court with the Kazakh testing him with his big serves.

Manas Dhamne came good against Beibit Zhukayev's big serves to come through with a 6-2, 3-6, 6-2 victory at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium on Wednesday. DH PHOTO / PRASHANTH HG

Intense battle

The final singles match of the day, meanwhile, lived up to its billing with world No. 167 Mayot and No. 275 Nagal left it all on the court to gift the fans some enthralling tennis in a three-hour marathon that saw multiple arguments with chair umpire, an under-serve and a brain-fade wrong line call that was out by several inches.

There was nothing to take away from any of the rivals as they fought for every inch of the court with the Frenchman saving seven match points in the tie-break to turn the tide in his favour after Sumit put the crowd on its feet by saving two match points to force the match into the decider.

Sumit had his moments of dominance on the court as he took the second set 6-1 with a tight service game backed by his fitness sprayed all over the court. This was after Mayot made it clear he knows how to handle crunch situations by taking the first set tie-breaker 7-4 after failing to hold his serve when he managed to break Sumit early.

By the time the match was deep into breaker with both locked at 10-10, the Frenchman, who took it deep from 2-6 down, looked all pumped up to finish off a visibly tired Sumit, whose service game abandoned him by now despite desperate shouts of encouragement by the fans.

A clever Mayot actually sowed the seeds for tiring out his opponent back in the second set when he figured out his rivals' never-say-die attitude of chasing every ball by making him run across the court during the closing stages of the set while it was quite clear it will be a mammoth task for the Frenchman to recover at 1-5 down.

Taking nothing away from Sumit, the Indian had his chances of sealing the game but back-to-back volley errors during match-point situation of tie breaker came back to bite him. That same identical volley error on his serve frustrated him yet again as he smashed the remaining ball in his pocket out of the stadium. Mayot had no intention to let go this chance as the Frenchman sealed the win with an ace while Sumit vented his anger by smashing the racket and throwing it away to end his campaign.

Results: Round of 16: Singles (prefix denotes seeding): 2-Harold Mayot (Fra) bt Sumit Nagal (Ind) 7-6 (2), 6-1, 7-6 (11); Dhakshineswar Suresh (Ind) bt Felix Balshaw (Fra) 6-3, 1-6, 7-6 (4); Manas Dhamne (Ind) bt Beibit Zhukayev (Kaz) 6-2, 3-6, 6-2; 1-Pedro Martinez (ESP) bt Micheal Geerts (Bel) 7-6(3), 6-3; 6-Timofey Skatov (Kaz) bt Mitsuki Wei Kang Leong (MAS) 6-3, 7-5; Cedrik-Marcel Stebe (Ger) bt Borna Gojo (Cro) 7-5, 7-6(9); Jonas Forejtek (CZE) bt Dan Martin (Can) 6-7 (5), 6-1, 6-4; Matteo Martineau (FRA) bt Eric Vanshelbolm (UKR) 6-2, 6-2.
Doubles: Max Houkes/ Niels Visker (NED) bt 2xAnirudh Chandrasekar/ Arjun Kadhe (Ind) 2-6, 7-6(4), 10-5; 1-N Sriram Balaji (Ind)/ Neil Oberleitner (Aus) bt Vladyslav Orlov (Ukr)/ Eero Vasa (Fin) 6-3, 6-2; Petr Bar Biryukov/ Grigoriy Lomakin (Kaz) bt Siddhant Banthia/ Dhakshineswar Suresh (Ind) 6-4, 6-4; SD Prajwal Dev/ Nitin Kumar Sinha (Ind) bt Micheal Geerts (Bel) / Seita Watanabe (JPN) 6-2, 7-5.

Swiatek, Gauff carry teams to quarterfinals

SYDNEY, AFP: World No. 2 Iga Swiatek was a comfortable winner as Poland reached the United Cup quarterfinals while Coco Gauff also eased to victory for defending champions the United States on Wednesday.

Six-time Grand Slam champion Swiatek beat 97th-ranked Suzan Lamens 6-3, 6-2 in the tie against the Netherlands in Sydney.

Hubert Hurkacz, on his way back after being out for seven months following knee surgery, defeated Tallon Griekspoor 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) as Poland sealed their last-eight spot.

Poland will face hosts Australia on Friday.

In Perth, world No. 4 Gauff put the United States ahead in their quarterfinal against Greece with a 6-3, 6-2 win over former number three Maria Sakkari.

The 21-year-old Gauff struggled with her serve as she suffered her first-ever defeat at the United Cup on Monday when she was stunned by Spain's Jessica Bouzas Maneiro.

Medvedev beats Tiafoe

Former world No. 1 Daniil Medvedev extended his impressive start to the season ahead of the Australian Open with a straight-sets win over Frances Tiafoe in Brisbane on Wednesday.

The Brisbane top seed took just an hour to defeat the American 6-3, 6-2 following his equally ruthless first-round win over Hungary's Marton Fucsovics on Monday.

Satwik-Chirag, Sindhu sail through

Other Indians suffer early exits at Malaysia Open

KUALA LUMPUR, PTI

Returning from a prolonged injury lay-off, PV Sindhu began the new season on a winning note along with the formidable men's doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy as they entered the second round of the Malaysia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament here on Wednesday.

The 30-year-old former world champion, who had opted to withdraw from all BWF World Tour events in October last year to recover from a foot injury, defeated Chinese Taipei's Sung Shuo Yun 21-14, 22-20 in a 51-minutes showdown of the women's singles opening round.

The 18th-ranked Sindhu showed no signs of discomfort as she overcame the lower-ranked Sung for the second time to take her head-to-head to 2-0 and set up a round-of-16 clash with world No.9 Tomoka Miyazaki of Japan.

Later, Satwik and Chirag, the former World No.1 pair, saw off Chinese Taipei's Yang Po-Hsuan and Lee Jhe-Hue 21-13, 21-15 in 35 minutes to also enter the pre-quarterfinals.

The Asian Games champions, who had reached the semifinals of the season-ending BWF World Tour Finals in December, will face Malaysia's Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap.

The mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto, ranked 17th in the world, however, bowed out in the round of 32 after losing to the lower-ranked American duo of Presley Smith and Jennie Gai 15-21, 21-18, 15-21 following a hard-fought 56-minute contest.

Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand lost 9-21, 23-21, 19-21 to Indonesia's Febriana Dwipuji Kusuma and Meilysa Trias Puspitasari.

PV Sindhu eased past Chinese Taipei's Sung Shuo Yun at the Malaysia Open on Wednesday. AP/PTI FILE PHOTO

Sen-Shetty opener at India Open; Sindhu in tricky draw

NEW DELHI, PTI: Indian shuttlers have been handed a tricky draw at the Yonex-Sunrise India Open Super 750 tournament here later this month, with former world champion PV Sindhu set to face Vietnam's Thuy Linh Nguyen, against whom she had lost twice recently, in the women's singles first round.

Lakshya Sen, the 2022 champion, will open campaign against the talented Ayush Shetty in an all-Indian clash.

The tournament will be played from January 13 to 18 at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

The event will be a dress rehearsal for the BWF World Championships to be held at the same venue in August.

From an Indian perspective, Sen's clash with former world junior bronze medallist Shetty will ensure that only three of the four Indian men's singles players in the fray can progress to the second round. The winner of this all-Indian clash will then face either fourth seed Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei or Japan's Kenta Nishimoto.

Top boxers win as refereeing issues continue to spark row

GREATER NOIDA, PTI: Star boxers, including Nikhat Zareen and Minakshi Hooda, lived up to their top billing with easy wins but the spotlight once again fell on questionable refereeing as the National Boxing Championships were marred by fresh controversy and a disrupted bout here on Wednesday.

Controversy dominated the men's competition as one bout was abandoned after disruption while another one saw a boxer bite his opponent.

Railways Sports Control Board boxer Ishmeet accused All India Police's (AIP) Mohit of "biting" him during their middleweight (75kg) bout.

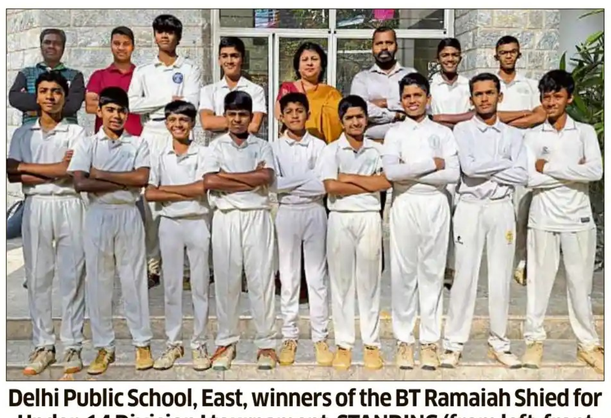
After receiving a standing count earlier, Mohit allegedly bit Ishmeet on the shoulder multiple times in the second round.

BTR Shield: Delhi Public School, East emerge champs

BENGALURU, DHNS

Saurjyesh Das's half-century followed by a disciplined bowling effort by his team-mates saw Delhi Public School, East stitch together a 48-run win over Poorna Vikasa Vidyalaya and emerge champions of the BT Ramaiah Shied for Under-14 Division I tournament here.

LOCAL CRICKET



Delhi Public School, East, winners of the BT Ramaiah Shied for Under-14 Division I tournament. STANDING (from left, front row): Ujjwal, Vedant, Dwit, Ashwwath Nagarajan, Vishist PJ, Kriday, Anirudh, Krishna, Saurjyesh Das. Back row: Mariasavari (assistant coach), Rizwan (assistant coach), Vastvik, Trishaan, Manila Carvalho (principal), Rajaram (head coach), Hrithik Polin, Ameya Nayak.

Riding on Saurjyesh's measured 91-ball 64, DPS, East could only manage 179 runs all out on the board in 50 overs. Atharv Karadi (3/28), Sharav Chetan Koundinya (3/36) and Tejas Sudhindra Bhat (2/30) were the pick of the bowlers for Poorna Vikasa Vidyalaya.

Taking a cue from their opponents' bowlers, DPS then got into the act with the ball to defend their total. While Vishist PJ (3/31) claimed three wickets, Ashwwath Nagarajan (2/16) and Krishna (2/20) took two each to bowl out PVV for 131 in 44 overs and lift the trophy.

Brief scores: Final: Delhi Public School, East: 179 all out in 50 overs (Saurjyesh Das 64, K Hrithik Polin 35; Atharv Karadi 3-28, Sharav Chetan Koundinya 3-36, Tejas Sudhindra Bhat 2-30) bt Poorna Vikasa Vidyalaya: 131 all out in 44 overs (Hemanth Chandra Shekar 39; Ashwwath Nagarajan 2-16, Krishna 2-20, Vishist PJ 3-31).

Ind U-19 sweep series 3-0

BENONI, PTI: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi extended his jaw dropping run with a sizzling hundred while Aaron George too struck a fine century as India U-19 thrashed South Africa by 233 runs in the third youth ODI to sweep the three-match series here on Wednesday.

Sent in to bat, skipper Sooryavanshi, who smashed a 24-ball 68 in the previous game, once again went on a six-hitting spree, hammering 10 maximums in a fluent 74-ball 127.

The 14-year-old from Bihar was ably supported by George, who compiled 118 off 106 balls, as the duo laid the platform for a massive total with a 227-run opening stand.

Brief scores: India U-19: 393/7 in 50 overs (Aaron George 118, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi 127, Vedant Trivedi 34, Mohamed Enaan 28 n.o.; Ntando Soni 3-61, Jason Rowles 2-59) bt South Africa U-19: 160 all out in 35 overs (Daniel Bosman 40, Paul James 41, Corne Botha 36 n.o; Kishan Singh 3-15, Mohamed Enaan 2-36). **Result:** India U-19 won by 233 runs. **Series:** India U-19 won the 3-match series 3-0. **PoM & PoS:** Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

Darshan shines in Jaihind Cricket Club's victory

BENGALURU, DHNS: An unbeaten ton by Darshan Shetty and a half-century each by Saket KA and Samvit Shastri propelled Jaihind Cricket Club to a massive 161-run win over Canara Union Cricket Club at the KSCA Group I, Division V league cum knockout tournament for the JB Mallaradhya Shield here.

LOCAL CRICKET

Batting first, Darshan smashed a 96-ball 103 not out while Saket added a 76-ball 69 and Samvit scored a 56-ball 54 to help Jaihind post 334/7 in 50 overs.

In reply, Canara Union batters, except CM Srinivas (53), struggled to put up a fight before being bundled out for 173 in 38.1 overs.

Brief scores: Jaihind CC: 334/7 in 50 overs (Samvit Shastri 54, Praneel GM 25, Saket KA 69, Darshan Shetty 103 n.o.; Abhishek Kumar 4-41, Mohammed Azharuddin 2-58) bt Canara Union CC: 173 all out in 38.1 overs (Anirudh M Bangera 31, CM Srinivas 53, Shashnath Gowda 35; Asif Ali 2-23, Sachin KS 2-21).

Rajajinagar Colts CA: 67 all out in 15.1 overs (Vinod Eshwar 28; Shashank HC 3-26, Chaman Nikhil S 5-22) lt to Head Quarters CC: 69/1 in 13.1 overs (Chirag Raj M 33 n.o.).

Seshadripuram College: 162 all out in 39 overs (Monish Gowda GS 56, Hruday Gowda 30; AT Deekshit 2-26, Prashanth Narayanaswamy 3-40, Kunal MS 2-16) lt to Eminents Cricketers: 164/4 in 25.2 overs (Mohith Gowda M 61 n.o., Jai Kishan S 40; Manish L 2-51).

Yuvaka Sangha CC: 246 all out in 49.5 overs (Eashan Roy 28, Deepak Kumar 40, Vihaan C Reddy 26, Ujwal C Reddy 39, Deepak M 31; Darshan Raja 4-52, Rohith R 2-32) bt Vasanthanagar Cricketers: 185 all out in 45.1 overs (Raj Singh Chauhan 50, Mikil Shreyal 29; Ravi Patil 5-32, Srinath Seshadri 2-31).

Friends CC, Kolar: 187 all out in 47.1 overs (Mohmmed Raheel A 33, Manvir Agasthya 29, Sujan Aravind N 25, Harshit Arun Mishra 29; Madhusudan R 2-46, Prasanna Patilkulkarni 3-28, Akash S R 3-36, Apurva Kale 2-23) lt to National Cricketers: 190/6 in 29.4 overs (Kathir Vel R 32, R Mahesh Reddy 61, Suneel Raju 43; Harshit Arun Mishra 2-28, Aryan S 3-24).

Zaid's hat-trick steers Al Fateh

BENGALURU, DHNS: Zaib Sherief produced a hat-trick (33rd, 45th and 56th minutes) as Al Fateh FC prevailed over MD Sporting FC in a BDFA B Division League match at the Bangalore Football Stadium here on Wednesday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

Harsh Suhanda (19th) and Adity Ashok (55th) scored the other two goals.

Results: Al Fateh FC: 5 (Harsh Suhanda 19th, Zaib Sherief 33rd, 45th, 56th, Adity Ashok 55th) bt MD Sporting FC: 2 (Siroi Khwairakpam 9th, Jugesh Singh 80+1st - P); Infinite Belagavi FC: 2 (Mohammad Shamil P 9th, Koushik Patil- 40th) drew with Juno FC: 2 (Shougijam Shreekant Singh 52nd, Chakresh Acharya 80+3rd -P); Vehicles FC: 1 (Athingdang Sangta ML 69th) bt ADE FC: 0.

Middle distance star Johnson hangs up shoes

NEW DELHI, PTI: National record-holder and Asian Games gold-winning Indian middle distance runner Jinson Johnson announced his retirement on Wednesday, saying that "it is time for something new" after a 15-year career shaped by "relentless training, quiet struggles, and painful injuries".

Jinson Johnson

The 34-year-old Kerala athlete has not competed since winning a 1500m bronze in the Hangzhou Asian Games in October 2023. His best moment was winning the 1500m gold in the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games with a time of 3 minutes 44.72 seconds. He also won a silver in 800m in the same Games.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

5th Ashes: Australia vs England **(day 5, 4:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

Vijay Hazare Trophy: Karnataka vs Madhya Pradesh, Baroda vs Chandigarh **(both 9 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

HOCKEY

HIL: SG Pipers vs. Ranchi Royals **(women, 4:30 pm)**; Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers vs Vedanta Kalinga Lancers **(men, 7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

TENNIS

United Cup: Quarterfinals **(12 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

Bengaluru Open: Quarterfinals **(11 am)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

BADMINTON

Malaysia Open: Round 2 **(6:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

Fit-again Shreyanka looks to relaunch herself from WPL

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

Shreyanka Patil was among India's brightest young talents when she won the Purple Cap and the Emerging Player of the Tournament during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's first-ever Women's Premier League coronation in March 2024.

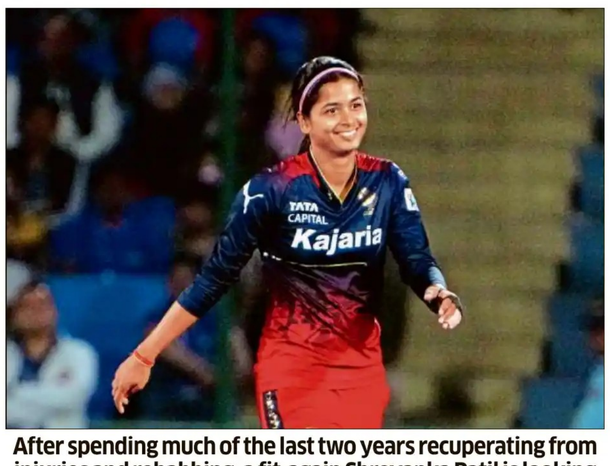
However, it has not been smooth sailing for the Bengaluru girl as back-to-back injuries that required lengthy rehab programmes at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence have left her fighting for a national spot all over again.

Recalling the dreadful period, Shreyanka said that it was mentally draining but a very good support system and conversations with India stars helped her come through.

"It was hard mentally to be honest. I was down," Shreyanka said in a media interaction on Wednesday before RCB's WPL campaign opener against Mumbai Indians on January 9.

"I spoke to many girls at CoE and then people like Bumrah (Jasprit), SKY (Suryakumar), Riyan (Parag) helped a lot. After hearing what they were going through, I kind of figured out my way to get out of the injury."

While it was a joyous moment for the country when India lifted its first-ever ODI World Cup in November, it was "happy but also disappointing" for Shreyanka, who was in the India scheme of things before her injuries. "ODI World Cup was a big miss for me. Very proud and happy that the girls won but it was also disappointing for me because I was not able to lift the trophy with them."



After spending much of the last two years recuperating from injuries and rehabbing, a fit-again Shreyanka Patil is looking forward to the WPL with RCB. PTI FILE PHOTO

However, Shreyanka has been taking small steps on her comeback trail, featuring for the Barbados Royals in the Women's Caribbean Premier League in September, a first since October 2024.

While things have not been all colourful having picked just one wicket in five appearances, it did turn sweet when Shreyanka received a call from RCB about her retention before the mega auction.

"Malo sir (Malolan Rangarajan) called me and said that I was retained. I was actually blank. I was shocked because for someone who has not played cricket for 13 months, it is not easy for a franchise to say I will back your skills. It was very emotional for me. The trust and faith also gives any young cricketer the confidence and motivation."

While Shreyanka credited RCB for checking upon her during her tough moments, she also understands the trust and faith needs to be repaid.

"So for me, the ultimate goal for the season is to help RCB win the WPL trophy again. Very simple. The short term goals are to enjoy the season as I have missed it for a year. I am very grateful to be back so I will try to execute my plans as much as possible."

FOOTBALL EPL

Clash with hierarchies costs Maresca, Amorim their jobs

Duo also fluffed their lines tactically, refusing to tweak their methods

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca (left) and Manchester United coach Ruben Amorim leave the clubs in a bigger mess than they came in. REUTERS/ AFP

In a span of five days, starting with New Year's Day, managers of two high-profile clubs have lost their jobs. Chelsea's Enzo Maresca was the first to go before Manchester United parted ways with Ruben Amorim.

While underwhelming results were a major factor behind their mid-season sackings, the common line in their premature exits was the simmering differences they had with their respective club hierarchies that came to a boil during the busy festive time.

Despite winning the Conference League, the now-expanded Club World Cup where they beat Champions League winners Paris St Germain in the final this summer after securing Champions League qualification last season for the first time in two years since he took charge 18 months ago, Maresca has had a testy relationship with the Chelsea board under the ownership of BlueCo.

When results go your way, like it did during the early part of the Italian's reign with the Blues -- who have a history of hiring and firing managers -- those differences often get papered over. At the end of the day, victories and titles are the sources of managers' bargaining power.

But when performances dip, like it has for Maresca with Chelsea suffering five losses and seven draws in 20 games in the Premier League to be placed fifth -- more importantly, 17 points adrift of leaders Arsenal — the rumblings assume more prominence.

Maresca, who has often complained about the club's medical staff over player workload and handling of injuries, then let it rip after the 2-0 win over Everton on December 13, saying the previous 48 hours were the "worst since I joined the club" and "many people didn't support me and the team."

He also insisted he wasn't talking about the fans who booed every time the club failed. That was the cul-de-sac and it was just a matter of time before he would be asked to pack his bags, which happened on January 1.

Maresca didn't cover himself in glory managerially either, displaying stubbornness tactically. Having worked as an assistant to Pep Guardiola at Manchester City in 2022, Maresca was rooted to the Spaniard's philosophy of possession-based play, quite unlike the new Chelsea that prefers to attack from the wings. The squad at his disposal couldn't really adapt to his system, and often Maresca ended up playing players out of position. Eventually, it all fell apart following a promising start.

Amorim arrived at United, who have been on a downward spiral since the exit of the great Alex Ferguson in 2013, with a lot of hype. Such was the belief the board had in the 40-year-old Portuguese, they named him as the first head coach – not manager – of the modern era. The only man to have previously held that title was Wilf McGuinness, who took over from the legendary Sir Matt Busby in 1969.

The reason why the United hierarchy – the Glazer family (majority owners) and Sir Jim Ratcliffe's INEOS Group (minority owners) – named Amorim as the head coach was to let him focus on training and strategies. Director of football Jason Wilcox and chief executive Omar Berrada would look after recruitment, player contracts and all other aspects.

Having attained instant success in his previous stint with Sporting Lisbon (2020-2024) where he won two league titles that turned him into a hot property, Amorim tried to replicate the same 3-4-3 system with the Red Devils. When a team is struggling, the onus would be to first strengthen the defence and then shore up the attack. Playing with three at the back was always going to backfire given United's travails and they just couldn't cope with it.

Barring reaching the Europa League final last summer where they lost 1-0 to Tottenham Hotspur, United's results under Amorim were quite underwhelming, winning just 25 out of 63 in all competitions. Pressure kept growing on Amorim and he let it loose last week, claiming he was United's 'manager' and 'not just coach' before telling Wilcox and Berrada to do their respective jobs properly.

That sealed Amorim's fate, who came in as one of the most sought-after coaches in the world but left with his resume blotted.

Carrick, Ole hold talks

Michael Carrick and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer could each hold fresh talks with Manchester United as the club seeks to appoint an interim head coach after the sacking of Ruben Amorim, according to British media reports.

The two former United players are believed to have held a first round of informal discussions.

Forest ambush Hammers

Nuno Espirito Santo insisted troubled West Ham can still avoid relegation after Morgan Gibbs-White's late penalty fired Nottingham Forest to a crucial 2-1 win on Tuesday, reports AFP.

Fourth-bottom Forest are now seven points clear of third-bottom West Ham with 17 games left in the fight for survival.

ICC willing to address security concerns: BCB

DHAKA, PTI

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Wednesday said the ICC is "willing to work closely" with it to address "security concerns" around the team's participation in the T20 World Cup in India even though its demand for a change of venue has not yet been accepted.

The T20 World Cup starts on February 7 and Bangladesh are due to play their four games in Kolkata and Mumbai.

"In its communication, the ICC has reiterated its commitment to ensuring the full and uninterrupted participation of the Bangladesh team in the tournament," the BCB said in a statement.

"The ICC has conveyed its willingness to work closely with the BCB to address the concerns raised and has assured that the Board's inputs will be welcomed and duly considered as part of the detailed security planning for the event," it added.

BCB president Aminul Islam and government Asif Nazrul addressed a press conference after the board issued the statement on the sensitive subject.

Both reiterated their stance on why they are not comfortable with the team's travel to India. Azrul was more vocal than BCB president Aminul.

"So far, we have very clearly taken this decision that we will make the ICC understand that we do not have an environment suitable for playing in India. This will be conveyed tonight or by tomorrow morning.

"With those sufficiently strong arguments, we will make the ICC understand that the core principle of our stand is that on the questions of Bangladesh's security, Bangladesh's honour, and Bangladesh's dignity, we will not compromise. But we definitely want to play the Cricket World Cup," said Nazrul.

Aminul cited the arrangement between India and Pakistan under which the arch-rivals play their ICC matches in a third country. With security for his players being a major concern for Aminul, he argued the same should be done for the games involving Bangladesh.

"When the Champions Trophy was held, India did not go to Pakistan, and Pakistan also did not come to India to play in the last World Cup. So we are also hopeful that we will get a proper response (from the ICC). ...you know that the hybrid World Cup that is happening, the main reason behind that is security. So we are hopeful that we will be able to establish the reasons we have," added the BCB president.

The BCB also rejected reports that it had been told to either participate as per the decided schedule or forfeit its games by the ICC.

Bethell ton gives England slim hope

Jacob Bethell fulfilled his rich potential with a chanceless maiden Test century Wednesday as England built a fragile 119-run second-innings lead with two wickets remaining to give themselves a glimmer of hope in the final Ashes Test.

J Bethell

At the end of day four at the Sydney Cricket Ground, England had reached 302-8 with Bethell imperious on 142 not out and number 10 Matthew Potts yet to score.

England are desperate for another morale-boosting win after victory in the previous Test at Melbourne. Australia lead 3-1 and have already retained the Ashes.

It was the 22-year-old Bethell who kept their faint hopes alive after Zak Crawley fell early and first-innings centurion Joe Root departed cheaply.

He powered to his hundred off 162 balls by smashing a lofted drive over midwicket for four.

"It's pretty special, it's not really sunk in yet. I haven't really had time to kind of reflect on it," Bethell told reporters.

Bethell had his parents in the stands and raised his bat towards them as he passed the milestone. "To do that and have the family there was very special," said the left-hander.

Brief scores: England: 384 and 302/8 in 75 overs (Ben Duckett 42, Jacob Bethell 142 n.o., Harry Brook 42, Jamie Smith 26; Scott Boland 2-34, Beau Webster 3-51) vs Australia (O/n: 518/7): 567 all out in 133.5 overs (Travis Head 163, Marnus Labuschagne 48, Steven Smith 138, Cameron Green 37, Beau Webster 71 n.o.; Brydon Carse 3-130, Josh Tongue 3-97, Ben Stokes 2-95).

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